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LITERATURE

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LITERATURE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"First, good Peter Quince," said Nick Bottom, "say what the play treats on . . . and so grow to a point." Such good advice is worthy of being followed. We are about to consider ways and means of presenting literature to school children. If we hope to "grow to a point" in our discussion, it would seem wise for us first to be clear as to the nature of literature itself.

To give a precise definition of literature is no easy task. Like many other terms in common use, it has various meanings. In one sense all printed material may be spoken of as literature, and we hear even advertising pamphlets dignified by the title. Such a broad use of the word is perfectly correct, but obviously it is not the way in which we use it when we speak of teaching literature in school. We do not propose to present all sorts of printed material to children, but only such as conforms to certain rather high standards.

To be classed as literature in the narrower sense, the sense in which it is used here, a bit of prose or poetry must have some genuine and permanent worth. The bulk of what appears in the daily newspapers and current magazines, good as it may be in its own way, cannot be classed as real literature. It is read by the public to-day and forgotten to-morrow. Many of the best-selling novels have a vogue which lasts scarcely more than six months, and, lacking those high qualities which give permanence

to a literary work, they, too, cannot be classed as literature. Only the best of all the work which finds its way into print, only that work which has enduring merit, is worthy of being called literature and made the subject of serious study.

But is all published material which endures literature? Clearly not. Euclid's books on geometry are much older than Shakespeare's plays; but they are not literature. If our definition is to be adequate, some further lines of demarcation must be drawn. Text-books on physics, mathematics, botany, history, may be of the greatest value to students of the subjects to which they are devoted; but unless they possess a certain quality which might be called human interest, they would not be classed as literature. Along with the capacity for endurance must go a certain breadth of appeal. A text-book on mathematics is of interest to the mathematician, a text-book on botany is of interest to the botanist; but a real poem will touch any one who has the imagination and the intelligence to appreciate it. Literature, in short, is of value, not only to the mathematician, the botanist, or the historian, but to all cultured people.

The qualities of content and form which give to a literary work permanence and broad human worth are difficult to determine. Opinions differ greatly regarding the merits even of outstanding compositions; and in the end the question as to whether a given work is worthy of ranking as literature in the highest sense will be settled, not by definitions and theories, but by the general taste of mankind—or rather by that portion of mankind which concerns itself with such matters. But a short

discussion of the point may help to clear our minds regarding the principles upon which literary taste is founded.

Some writers lay down as the one essential requisite of literature that it must contain some emotional appeal. Although this definition is, perhaps, too narrow, it is nevertheless suggestive. In most pieces of literature, whether prose or poetry, there is an emotional colouring. When we read Dickens, we laugh, we weep, we pity, we grow indignant; and the true poet will play on our emotions as a musician draws music from an organ. In many beautiful and lofty passages, especially of poetry, the emotional element is so pervasive, so essential, that such passages can be understood only through the emotions. If subjected to dry and precise analysis they yield very little meaning. Blot out from Tennyson's poem, "*Break, Break, Break,*" the emotional appeal, and what is left? And Burns' admonition to nature not to disturb his "slumbering fair" would be sheer nonsense if separated from the lyric mood in which it was uttered. Whether or not emotion is the one essential requisite of real literature may be a debatable question; but it is at least true that the emotional element is the heart and soul of some of the loftiest verse and prose.

To this emotional power most authorities would add the requirement that to be called literature in the best sense a work must have nobility of thought. In certain kinds of literature the lucidity and the elevation of the thought are more important than the feeling; and in all good writing, even the purest lyrical poetry, there is a foundation of fine sanity. This does not mean that all literature must be characterized by profundity and erudition. Some of the best poetry, and prose too, is as simple and clear as a running brook. Neither does

it mean that all good writers should be full of quotable aphorisms. But it does mean that, when a really great writer is dealing with a subject that demands thought, he treats it with insight and comprehension; and it means, further, that even in the richest emotional passages of the best writing there is evident that lofty restraint which characterizes the noblest natures. Milton, confronted with the prospect of passing long years in blindness, was capable of expressing himself in a vein of the highest poetry, because the deep sorrow which shook his soul was controlled and beautified by a noble fortitude.

> Thus with the year
> Seasons return; but not to me returns
> Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
> Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
> Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine.

That is elevated poetry because it is the product of a mind capable of experiencing the deepest feeling and of tempering that feeling by sublime wisdom.

All authorities, further, whatever may be their view of the essential content of literature, agree that there should be evidenced in the form conspicuous artistry—as the dictionary puts it, there should be present "purity and grace of style and artistic construction." When we deal with literature, we have entered the portals of art and are concerned not with scientific accuracy but with emotional power and æsthetic perfection. How far the child may be led in the appreciation of form will be dealt with later, but a recognition that æsthetic qualities are present in literature is essential to a real understanding of its character; and a recognition of the fact that literature is one of the arts, or rather that in its various forms of prose and poetry it includes several of the arts,

will determine the teacher's attitude towards it, and will bring him to see that he must approach it in a different way from that in which he would approach one of the sciences.

The definition of literature which has been developed here through several paragraphs might be summarized as follows: Literature is writing that is of genuine and permanent worth and is broadly human in its appeal; it is characterized by emotional power and nobility of thought, and conforms to high standards of taste in form and style.

CHAPTER II

THE TWOFOLD TASK

In dealing with literature the teacher has before him a twofold task—on the one hand he must teach his pupils to interpret correctly what they read, and on the other to appreciate it. Many teachers with a lively appreciation of literature themselves are impatient of the elementary task of interpretation. In their eagerness to make their pupils get as much pleasure from reading as they themselves do, they forget the child's extremely limited powers of interpretation, and they fail to realize that he cannot appreciate what he does not understand. Other teachers, fully conscious of the child's limitations but forgetting that he must appreciate or he will not read, dwell on interpretation in such a way as to kill any chance of enjoyment. The successful teacher of literature is the one who justly divides his efforts between the two tasks of *interpretation* and *appreciation*—the teacher who at the same time tries to develop in his pupils the ability to read with freedom and intelligence and the taste for reading what is good.

Developing the Habit of Careful Interpretation

The teacher of literature must necessarily spend a good deal of time in bringing out the meaning of the selections he is teaching. The language of books is different from the language of everyday life. In books the child is constantly meeting with words and phrases that are unfamiliar to him. If he is to build up his speaking and his reading vocabulary, the meaning of such words and phrases must be explained to him. It

is true, of course, that by continual reading the child will gradually become familiar with most of the common words of the language; but it is a rather negligent teacher who leaves this learning of the language altogether to chance. It is further true that spelling, which is no longer a mere rhyming over of letters, but has become a real study of words, will relieve the literature lesson of some of its drudgery. But spelling deals with words in isolation, which often take on new meanings and new suggestive power when they appear in a story or poem. An important stage of every literature lesson must necessarily be the explanation of difficult passages. Up to the present no royal road has been discovered to the goal of clear interpretation.

A teacher who loves literature will sometimes say: "Oh, let the child interpret for himself. Do not kill his interest in literature by long and tiresome discussions of meanings." But such a teacher, although he has observed a real fault in much of the teaching of literature, has not fully analysed the task that lies before him. Nothing is more important in the teaching of literature than that the teacher should realize what may safely be left with the pupils and what must be taught. On this point there is a great deal of loose thinking. It is true that the beauty and the power of a selection may be left to work their own influence on the child when once the selection is understood; but when he has failed to understand a passage, its meaning must be taught. The child who does not see the significance of a poem will find in it no real beauty or power. If the correct interpretation of a difficult piece is not worked out, ludicrous mistakes are apt to arise, which may have the result of spoiling a whole lesson and sometimes of leaving a wrong impression on a child's mind for life.

The child who is forced to interpret accurately is undergoing an excellent discipline. Occasionally, a phrase will occur that is capable of several interpretations. One pupil may say: "I think it means this." Another may say: "I think it means that." And one may be as nearly right as the other. But such vague phrases are the exception. One mark of good writing is that words are used with precision; and we miss something of the full force of good writing if we do not interpret with nicety. A child sometimes says: "I understand that, but I can't put it into words." It is just here that he must be helped. If he cannot put the thought of a passage into words, he has not really grasped it, although he may be on the verge of comprehension; and the mental training he receives from being forced to grasp firmly and express clearly the meaning of a passage is of real value in developing accuracy and clearness of thought.

Developing an Appreciation of Good Literature

A taste for reading and a taste for reading what is good, may be two different things. In this age, when publishers are turning out vast quantities of wildly impossible tales of the movie-serial sort, and when the poorer kind of magazines are filled on the one hand with the crudest sort of melodrama, and on the other with love stories so sentimental as to be merely silly, it is possible for a person to receive, not benefit, but harm, from his reading. By constant intercourse with this inferior sort of reading material a person's moral judgment will be warped and his artistic taste degraded.

Yet not all light literature is enervating. Much of it—one might safely say most of it—is stimulating and refreshing in its influence. A fascinating detective yarn,

a romantic love story, a gripping tale of adventure, a humorous sketch, when produced by a real artist, may help one to pass an entertaining and recreative evening. The teacher's problem is to give his pupils some power of discriminating between light literature that is good and light literature that is inferior, while making them aware that in literature that is high and serious there is something of value to them in the deepest sense.

We cannot, of course, hope to develop literary critics. To give a judgment on the literary value of any book requires a breadth of culture far beyond what is possible for a child. No field of human activity demands a larger and fuller development of mind than that of literary criticism. The critic whose opinion is worth listening to is a man of very fine sensibilities who has developed his powers of literary discrimination by years of intercourse with what is best. But even the most learned are liable to make mistakes. Macaulay sadly underestimated the truth and profundity of Wordsworth; Dr. Johnson considered Milton "easy, vulgar, and therefore disgusting;" and Addison thought Spenser incapable of charming an age of understanding. When such authorities make such glaring blunders, it is little wonder that ordinary readers nowadays can rarely agree about the merits of a recent book. A volume that is heralded as a masterpiece often dies in six months, while a work of real originality and power will sometimes be completely misunderstood. In a field where such depth of culture is required and where even educated people are prone to error, we cannot expect children to succeed.

Although a sound literary judgment cannot be developed in a child, the foundations of real taste may be laid. A literary judgment involves a breadth of reading that will make comparisons possible, and an

understanding of the principles of criticism that will permit of the application of genuine standards; but it also involves the capacity to be personally affected by what is good. The true critic will feel the loveliness of what he reads, will be touched by its pathos or elevated by its nobility of thought. Any literary judgment which does not involve a personal reaction is either a pedantic application of rigid and conventional rules of criticism or the repetition of a second-hand opinion. To the development of a real taste in literature nothing is more fatal than the expression of opinions that are not really felt; and against such affectation we must guard the child.

The teacher should not try to foist upon the class his own or other people's opinions. The standards of adults are not the same as those of children, and the child is frequently suspicious of the likes and dislikes of his elders. Very often the mere assertion by the teacher that a certain poem is beautiful is enough to make the child shun it; and the statement that a book is inferior or harmful will usually arouse in the child a morbid curiosity to see what it contains. Two things, and two things only, the teacher may do. He may induce the child to read a few bits of choice literature suited to his age and calculated to give him pleasure; and he may try to present these in such a way as to make him expect pleasure from his reading.

It was suggested earlier in this Chapter that the teacher should attempt to develop in the child some power of discriminating between what is good and what is bad in literature. This he should strive to do, not by teaching him rules of criticism, not by prohibiting what he believes to be harmful, nor by lauding what he feels to be good, but simply by bringing the child into contact

in a pleasurable way with a few suitable selections from what is best in literature. It does him no harm to read a reasonable number of the wholesome but artistically inferior books that are being produced in such quantities. Every reading child passes through the stage when he devours one or another of the popular series. What the wise teacher hopes for is not that the child will avoid these books altogether, but that if he is led to read some of the real children's classics, there will sooner or later emerge in his taste a genuine preference for what is good. What child who has really appreciated *Robinson Crusoe* or *Treasure Island* can be satisfied for long with the impossibilities and tiresome sameness of the poorer tales of adventure? If he has the inherent capacity for appreciating good literature (and it must be remembered that many children have it only in a very limited degree), that capacity will be brought to light naturally and surely by contact with what is best.

The problem of how the teacher is to present suitable selections in a pleasurable way, while at the same time training the child in habits of careful interpretation, offers serious difficulty. Sometimes, indeed, he may feel that it is a problem impossible of solution, and may decide that his only course is to choose one or the other. But he should not despair. Let him remember that good teachers of literature are successfully solving the problem every day, and let him realize, further, that no problem in all his work, when successfully solved, will bring more gratifying results. *To show how appreciation may be coupled with careful interpretation is the chief business of this Manual, and the problem with which the succeeding Chapters will principally be concerned.*

CHAPTER III

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE—PRIMARY

VERY curious notions have been extant as to what should be given children to read. It is only of recent years, indeed, that authors and publishers have directed their attention to the literary needs of the child, and that educational authorities have thought the matter worthy of serious study. Old school readers were frequently glaring examples of all that such books ought not be be. Sometimes their editors sought for prose and poetry in an exalted vein; sometimes they were content with mere drivel; but whatever were their literary standards, they usually succeeded in turning out books that were quite unsuited to the purposes for which they were intended.

The most fatal mistake in the past was to search always for something that contained an improving lesson. Extracts of pompous eloquence and bits of sheer doggerel were alike welcomed if only they pointed a moral; and it is to be feared that some modern educators have not freed themselves from this error. Literature at times does preach, and there is no doubt that the child will benefit in his moral nature by good reading. But this does not mean that all literature is didactic; neither does it mean that all didactic writings are literature. The great bulk of literature is written for quite other purposes than that of moralizing; and many of the verses and stories written to teach a lesson have no literary value whatever. Too frequently a few jingling lines magnifying the importance of kindness to animals or of the regular use of the tooth brush, are classed as "memory gems"

and taught as exquisite bits of literature. And with some teachers the sole criterion in judging the worth of a story is its suitability for moral instruction. Didactic selections of a superior sort no doubt have their value in the school-room. But if we present to the child only moralizing literature, we are giving him an entirely wrong notion of the function and character of books. Confined in his reading to literature that is didactic, the child may never realize that books are intended to provide entertainment and delight, and he may leave school with only a vague conception of the unlimited possibilities of a good library.

Another prevailing error in choosing literature for children is to overlook the immaturity of the child's mind. The mere fact that a story or a poem is about a child does not necessarily make it suitable for children. Many selections about children are written from the grown-up person's point of view. Such is "Little Boy Blue" in Eugene Field's collection *Lullaby Land.* Although this pathetic little poem will have a strong appeal for some children, it will touch even more poignantly the hearts of grown-up people, because its pathos is such as will be understood best by a father or a mother.

When we are deciding what the child shall read, we must try to look at the world through his eyes. Some things, to be sure, will appeal to grown-up people and children alike. *David Copperfield,* for instance, is probably almost as much enjoyed by intelligent children as by adults. But the mere fact that a literary work is of interest to grown-up people is no guarantee that it will engage the fancy of the child.

In choosing a piece of prose or a poem for school use, the teacher should ask himself not only—"Is this good literature?" but "Is this good literature of a sort that

will appeal to children?" Little by little the child should be led from the rather narrow section of literature definitely known as juvenile, to the broader field of general literature; but the transition should not be unduly hurried. It is a mistake to present the acknowledged classics to the child before he is capable of understanding them; and if we start him reading the greater things too soon, we are preventing him from becoming acquainted with those delightful juvenile stories and poems which should be every child's heritage. To give him a few extracts from the better known writers, in order that he may not leave school completely ignorant of their works, perhaps even unfamiliar with their names, is no doubt wise; but this does not mean that he should be overpowered with heavy reading. Instead of trying to acquaint him too fully with the greatest works of all ages, it is better to provide him with literature suited to his years, so that he may pass from the Mother Goose rhymes through the fairy-tale stage to narratives of adventure and sentiment, and finally come to maturity with a real taste for reading, and the world of adult literature lying before him—a country made enticing perhaps, by glimpses, but in the main fresh and unexplored.

A recognition of what reading material is suitable for the child is essential to successful teaching of literature. The authorized Readers provide a certain amount of material for reading and study, but it is not intended that the grade Readers should completely occupy the attention of a class. Indeed, the whole tendency of modern teaching is to get more and more away from the confines of a single book; and the teacher is constantly finding himself faced with the task of choosing suitable books for supplementary reading. In order to aid the

teacher in a selection a brief review of the field of juvenile literature will be attempted.

The Department of Education has felt this need, and has issued a "Graded List of Supplementary Reading," copies of which may be had on application.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE—JUNIOR

Nursery Rhymes

Legend has it that at one time there was a real Mother Goose. It is said that her name was not Goose, but Vergoose, and that she lived many years ago in Boston. There is, however, little to authenticate the legend, and it is more probable that the name Mother Goose has been borrowed from the nursery lore of France. In France, to be sure, Mother Goose is not a rhymster but a story-teller; but she is the same grotesque and amiable creature, and the universal friend of children. Whatever may have been the origin of the name, however, it is certain that there was published in the eighteenth century a book of children's verses, some of them possibly original, but most of them collected from the people, under the name of *Mother Goose Melodies*; and ever since that time Mother Goose has been the poet laureate of childhood. To the first collection other verses have been added, until there has been gathered around her name a whole treasury of nonsense rhymes.

Just why these nonsensical jingles should so capture the imagination of the child is more or less puzzling to grown-up people. Their simple strong rhythms certainly account for a large part of their appeal, but not for all. The oddity of the fancy and the constant resort to the element of surprise keep the child's mind continually alert and pleased. He listens for the last line of each

verse in *Old Mother Hubbard* with eagerness, because he is never quite sure what the remarkable dog is going to do next. When this element of surprise is coupled with a certain extravagance of fancy, the result is something grotesque and comical. The rhymes are nonsense, no doubt, but they are a delightful sort of nonsense that possesses an unrivalled fascination for children, and they have a way of sticking in the mind long after many more sensible verses are forgotten.

Allied with the nursery rhymes are many stories, not usually regarded as verses, but having certain elements of versification in their form. The tale of the old woman who found a sixpence is of this character. It is not a story in the sense that *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* is a story; it is the sheerest nonsense, amusing because of the repetition of the same rigmarole of words over and over again, and because of the accumulation of obstructions to the natural progress of events. An elaborate structure of "wouldn't's" is built up, only to collapse like a house of cards when the amiable cat agrees to catch the rat. This type of story is called a cumulative story. Another example of the same type is *The House that Jack Built*, which has a strong metrical movement and is usually chanted as a sort of rhythmic ritual. The number of such stories is limited, but the element of repetition, which is so strong a factor in their appeal, is present in a great many stories of other sorts.

Primary Stories

Every teacher should have at his command, both in his memory and in the library, a rich assortment of good stories. With the wealth of stories that has been handed down in folk-lore and the new wealth that is daily being provided by modern authors, there is an almost unlimited

supply. There are stories of little boys and girls, of animals and birds that act like people, of giants and elves and fairies, and all the other hundred and one things that inhabit the child's imagination. To show the teacher the variety of available stories a classification follows.

1. Folk Stories: Many of the best stories for children are of such ancient origin that we can date them only by conjecture. It is believed that some of the tales told to children to-day had their origin among the ancient Celts, and that others can be traced back in Germanic legend to the era before the domination of the Romans. From one generation to another these stories have been handed down, changing in language and in form to meet new conditions, until some writer of children's literature gave them a permanent form. These old stories when reproduced in good modern language are, perhaps, the best to be found. They have proved their worth in the one unanswerable way—by surviving the test of time. As examples of this type of story the following may be cited: *Dick Whittington and His Cat*, *Jack the Giant-Killer*, *Cinderella*, and *Bluebeard*.

2. The Myth: Many of the folk stories are mythological in origin. All races have produced myths. In the beginning these myths had religious significance. They were the attempts of the primitive mind to represent and explain the mysterious phenomena of nature. Why does the sun rise in the east and set in the west, and how does it get back in the night to rise once more next morning? The modern mind explains the sun's action in a scientific way—the world is round and it rotates upon its axis. But early peoples, unable to account for such phenomena by science, resorted to myths. Their imaginations invented a story to explain

what puzzled them. As these myths have come down to us, however, the symbolic element has almost disappeared, and there remains only the story. *Little Red Riding Hood* would not be recognized as a myth by any one unacquainted with its origin. It has been traced, however, in Germanic folk-lore, to a very early period, and in its original form it is found to be a myth representing the rotation of the seasons. Little Red Riding Hood is summer with her bright hood and childish happiness, gathering flowers by the wayside. The wolf is gaunt and cruel winter. The two meet in the woods—that would represent the first chilly days of autumn—but they part, and Red Riding Hood goes on her way once more. At her grandmother's cottage the old wolf eats her, and she disappears from the world. Summer is gone and winter holds sway. But Little Red Riding Hood does not stay eaten. The hunter, spring, kills the wolf, cuts him open, and Little Red Riding Hood steps out again as pretty and cheerful as ever.

In presenting such myths to children it is undesirable to enter into an interpretation of their symbolism. For the child the myth should be a story and nothing more. Hawthorne's handling of the Greek myths in his *Tanglewood Tales* and *Wonder Book* should be taken as a model.

3. Fairy Tales: Some modern writers have dipped into folk-lore and ancient superstition for material and have worked the old themes into delightful stories for children, just as some modern composers have elaborated old folk tunes into beautiful symphonies. These writers have got from folk-lore, not only story plots, but all kinds of fanciful creatures, fairies and gnomes and

witches and beautiful princesses and handsome princes —a whole theatrical company complete with fascinating stage trappings, costumes, and scenery. The tales which are the result are the sheerest product of the imagination. They are of the stuff that dreams are made of. In a fairy tale anything is likely to happen so long as it is desirable. Hideous beasts are transformed into charming princes; mice become horses and pumpkins coaches; and fairy godmothers are constantly granting wishes to unhappy and down-trodden people. The best of these stories will be found in the works of Hans Christian Andersen, the Brothers Grimm, Charles Perrault, and Andrew Lang. Closely allied with what are commonly called fairy stories are the wonderful tales preserved in the *Arabian Nights Entertainment.*

4. Fables: This is a definite type of story associated with the name of Æsop. The fable is told for the purpose of pointing a moral. It appeals to children because it is usually about animals, and because it is invariably a good story. Even the morals are appreciated by the children. The lessons taught are not of the namby-pamby sort so overworked by some of our sentimental modern writers, but are notable for shrewd and homely wisdom. Lists of fables need not be given, for *Æsop's Fables* are recognizable in all junior readers and in almost all children's story books.

5. Bible Stories: The suitability of Bible stories, especially many of those from the Old Testament, for use in schools is so generally recognized that it need not be stressed here. These stories have a dignity and moral worth coupled with a simplicity and depth of human interest which make them exercise on children an influence at once fascinating and elevating. For pure story

value few tales have ever equalled "David and Goliath," "Daniel in the Lion's Den," or the "Story of Joseph."

6. Historical Tales: From the pages of history and from legends of the past may be taken many simple and interesting stories. In this class are such stories as that of the first Prince of Wales, of The Princes in the Tower, of Alfred and the Cakes, of The Heroes of the Long Sault, and of Madeline de Verchères. These tales have a strong story value, and, although some of them are none too well authenticated, they serve as an interesting introduction to history by rousing the child's interest in the people and incidents of the past.

7. Modern Stories: Although most of the good stories for children are of ancient origin, the modern story should not be neglected. Children delight in hearing about other children like themselves and about the familiar things of to-day, and for narratives dealing with such matters we must go to modern writers. Added to these more or less realistic stories are many delightfully fanciful tales by modern writers. In recent years the production of juvenile fiction has come to be recognized as an important field for literary effort. Of the modern stories *Alice in Wonderland* is perhaps the most famous, but not far behind it are such children's classics as *Water Babies, Little Men, Peter Pan, The King of the Golden River,* and the *Just-So Stories.*

With such a profusion of valuable material the teacher will find difficulty, not in choosing something that will do, but in making a judicious selection. There is good and bad in children's fiction just as in adult fiction, and the teacher should not feel that because he is dealing with mere children he can let himself be content with inferior material. No story should be presented

to children unless it will make a genuine appeal. The final judgment as to a story's suitability for the needs of a certain class must remain with the teacher, but a brief analysis of what a good story should contain may be found helpful.

The appeal of the story should be based on some universal human interest. The best stories are those which strike the deepest. An analysis of two old favourites will take us to the secret places of the child's heart.

In the story of *Cinderella* we can discover a realization of genuine childish desires. Poor Cinderella was despised and abused by her elder sisters and was forced to do all the unpleasant drudgery of the house. But through the agency of her fairy godmother she is granted one thrilling evening. She is clad in a beautiful bejewelled gown and wears marvellous glass slippers. She drives to the royal ball in a magnificent coach. And on this grand occasion she dances with the prince and is the envy of all who behold her. What child would not delight in such an experience? What child would not love to be what Cinderella was that night?

And *Jack and the Beanstalk* is based on an equally deep-seated urge. Jack climbs up his magic beanstalk into a strange and fascinating world above the clouds. There he meets with many adventures, and, after some thrilling escapes, finally outwits the great ogre and triumphantly brings home to his mother the goose that lays the golden eggs. What child would not like to undergo such an adventure? What child would not long to perform such a wonderful deed?

Neither of these stories has been analysed completely, but enough has been done to show that they are based on deep human interests. They may be taken as

types. The one realizes in an imaginative way the universal desire of human creatures to *be* something admirable, and the other the equally universal desire to *do* something admirable.

To this broad appeal of the story must be added another element. A story, even one for small children, must have a plot if it is to catch and hold the interest; and a knowledge of what constitutes plot is of the utmost importance to the story-teller. The essence of plot is conflict. The fascination which holds the spectator's interest in a football or baseball game is somewhat the same as that of the reader in an exciting narrative.

The simplest form of plot in the realm of story is the conflict between a very good and likable person, who is the hero of the story, and an evil and detestable sort of person, who is its villain.

But the conflict may take other forms. In more mature stories it may be between the chief character and circumstances, as in the typical tale of adventure, or, higher still, between the forces of good and evil working in the soul of a man, as frequently in the Shakespearean tragedy; but in children's stories the conflict is usually of the hero-villain type.

Possibly the best example of conflict is to be found in the story of the three little pigs who build houses for themselves, and the sinister wolf who succeeds in circumventing two, but is himself completely outwitted by the third. The teacher should know how to make the most of the suspension of interest created by the conflict between the pigs and the wolf. A game which is all one-sided is not very interesting to watch, and a story whose outcome is clear from the beginning is likely to be just as tame. A skilful story-teller will keep the child

for a long time in doubt as to whether the little pig or the wolf is ultimately triumphant, and will even invent episodes to squeeze the last drop of interest from the crucial situation.

It would be an interesting exercise for students to follow out the conflict principle, as it shows itself in such simple stories as *Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Dick Whittington,* and *Little Red Riding Hood.*

CHAPTER IV

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE—MORE ADVANCED

As the child's mind expands and develops, the style of literature provided for him should gradually change. The chief difference in his new attitude towards books shows itself in his demand for greater realism. As his powers of observation and comprehension increase, he becomes dissatisfied with such nonsense verses as those about the cow jumping over the moon and the three men sailing in a tub, and demands that his poetry should deal with experiences, still touched with fancy, but more like those that he himself encounters in everyday life. Stevenson in his *Child's Garden of Verses* has met the child's demands in a way that has rarely been equalled, and his verses may be studied as illustrative of what should be typical in children's poetry when the nursery rhyme stage is passed.

Wordsworth in the Preface to the second edition of his *Lyrical Ballads* has described his purpose as follows: "The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life . . . and . . . to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect." For the incidents and situations which formed the raw material of his poems, Wordsworth went to the lives of ordinary men and women. Stevenson, writing for children, has chosen incidents and situations from the life of the child, and has thrown over these the colouring of his poetic imagination. In every page we catch the freshness of the child's outlook on life, his curiosity, his wonder,

his delight in this world which is "so full of a number of things." The child wakes in the morning, sits up in his little bed, rubs his eyes, and catches sight of a birdie hopping on the window-sill. As he gazes at it, his thoughts still full of sleep, it cocks its shining eye and seems to upbraid him for his sleepiness. Again the child is looking from the window as it rains. He sees it raining here, he sees it raining there, and a new thought dawns upon his mind.

> The rain is raining all around,
> It falls on field and tree,
> It rains on the umbrellas here,
> And on the ships at sea.

In another poem the child is seen lying awake at night, when the moon and the stars are set and the winds are high, listening to the wind like a horseman on the highway going by at the gallop, and then coming back at the gallop again.

In still another poem the child becomes an explorer. He climbs the cherry tree, holding the trunk with both his hands, and looks abroad on the next door neighbour's garden and on the river, following it with his eye to "where it slips into the sea among the ships." In his climb he has all the exhilaration of a real explorer—he is looking "abroad on foreign lands."

And so we can follow the child through his round of activities, as he delights in swings and toy soldiers, story-books, and ships made of chairs, until in the evening he takes the window to see old Leerie going by with lantern and with ladder on his daily round of lamp-lighting, or until he escapes into the garden at night to see "thousands of millions of stars," which so fill his mind with wonder that, when he is finally caught and

put to bed, the heavens are still bright in his imagination, and the stars keep going round in his head.

Although we notice a tendency in the child as he grows older to demand greater realism in his poetry, we must not overlook the fact that most children, especially imaginative children, never lose their love of whimsical nonsense. The tremendous popularity of A. A. Milne's book of poems, *When We Were Very Young*, is sufficient proof of this assertion. The charm of his verses is easy to catch but hard to explain. The curious thing about them is that they are enjoyed by young and old alike. The author has succeeded in reproducing the fun and fantasy of the nursery rhymes, and of adding to the traditional vein a delicate fantastic sort of humour that is irresistible. The rhyme about the king's breakfast, for instance, is Mother Goose and something more. The rhythm is not so marked as in most nursery rhymes, but it shows more artistry; the fancy is just as quaint, but there is added a lightness of touch and a keenness of humour that are entirely personal. The book is, in fact, a children's classic, and with its airy nonsense it should form a complement to Stevenson's more matter-of-fact but equally delightful volume.

When such verses as those we have just been considering and others by such writers as James Whitcombe Riley, Eugene Field, Walter de la Mare, and Isabel Ecclestone Mackay are available, why do we still insist on burdening childhood with moralizing doggerel? It is high time that such sententious humbug as the following should be cast out of the school-room for good:

> For every evil under the sun,
> There is a remedy, or there is none.
> If there is one, try and find it;
> If there is none, never mind it.

Little by little the child's emotions develop, his fancy becomes not less vivid but more consistent, his reasoning powers become more acute, his experience of life becomes broader and deeper, until he passes very gradually to the stage where he is reading with understanding and appreciation the simpler poetry written for adults.

Attempts have frequently been made to indicate the sorts of mature poetry that will be appreciated by children. Narrative poems in the stirring heroic vein of Tennyson's *Revenge,* Charles G. D. Roberts' *The Laughing Sally,* and some of Macaulay's simpler *Lays* are invariably and quite rightly set down first. Simple lyric poetry, especially such as is inspired by a love of nature, usually comes next.

But in the end it will be found easier to say what children will *not* like than what they will appreciate. If a selection is to appeal to them, the language must not be too difficult, the thought must not be too profound, and the feeling must not be out of the reach of a child's emotional equipment. What particular poems will make an appeal to a given child will depend, not so much on the limitation of childhood, as on the individual ability and taste of the child himself. If the teacher, when he is choosing a poem for his class to read, will call to mind definite children of his acquaintance and ask himself, "What would this poem mean to this child or that?" he will find himself less likely to make mistakes; but he must remember that few poems will appeal to all his class; for as the children grow older their tastes more and more diverge.

Children's Stories

As the child leaves the primary stage, he expects more reality, not only in his poetry but also in his prose. He is no longer amused by hearing of the gingerbread boy jumping out of the pan and running away, nor of the little red hen cutting her way out of the wolf's sack with a pair of scissors. He looks with disdain at fanciful incidents so far removed from the truth, and if you offer him impossible stories, he feels that you are insulting his intelligence. He considers that he has passed beyond the stage of implicit credence in the impossible, and he expects you to recognize this fact. He still remains a dreamer, a visionary (if he is not of the very matter-of-fact hard-headed temperament,) and demands of his books that they should make real and vivid for him the wonderful world of his imagination. But this world and the people and things in it must act in such a way as to produce a semblance of reality. The realism that the child demands is not the realism of adult fiction, which aims at picturing the world as it is with its sorrow as well as its joy, with its sordidness and cruelty as well as its nobility; it is the realm of romantic fiction, which depicts a marvellous world of fascinating people undergoing the most remarkable experiences, a world lit up by all the glamour of romance, a world "that never was on sea or land," but pictured with such vividness, such consistence, such truth of detail, that it has all the tang and colour of reality.

What is It that Children Expect to Find in Stories?

1. Exciting Incidents: The producers of moving pictures have recognized this fact, and are providing

endless reels of blood-curdling episodes for the children and for those with childish minds. Publishers, too, are aware of the constant demand for exciting juvenile fiction, and are publishing series after series of thrilling tales of adventure. Some of these are well-written and quite harmless, but as a rule they lack the charm, the wholesomeness, the real worth of the standard children's books. The authors of most of them are clever and fertile writers, but they are producing too rapidly. They turn out stories all of one pattern, frequently so exaggerated in their heroics as to give their young readers very distorted views of life. The tales produced by outstanding literary men and women of the past or of the present are undoubtedly to be preferred. No series can offer anything nearly so good as Stevenson's *Kidnapped* and *Treasure Island*, Marryat's *Mr. Midshipman Easy*, and Norman Duncan's *The Adventures of Billy Topsail*. The harmless and healthy purpose of this sort of literature is clearly indicated by Stevenson's dedication of *Kidnapped:* "This is no furniture for the scholar's library," he wrote, "but a book for the winter evening school-room, when the tasks are over and the hour for bed draws near; and honest Alan, who was a grim old fire-eater in his day, has in this new avatar no more desperate purpose than to steal some young gentleman's attention from his Ovid, carry him awhile into the Highlands and the last century, and pack him to bed with some engaging images to mingle with his dreams."

2. The Comic: Humour of character and brilliant wit are both above the heads of children; but they will readily respond to fun that is simple and obvious. Although we should try to meet the child on his own ground and give him the sort of humour he can appreciate, we should endeavour, here as elsewhere, to educate his tastes.

We should try to make him realize that practical jokes and horseplay are a very low form of humour. We cannot bring the child to see the whimsical humour of Sir James Barrie's Scottish stories with their deeply human understanding of Scottish character, but we can get him to appreciate to the full *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn.*

3. Wish Fulfilment: Children are always pretending that they are some one other than themselves, and that they are actually doing something that they would like to do. The more imaginative children especially, live in a world of unreality, and the skilful author of children's stories will make vivid for them this land of their desires. Here is the function of the fairy tale, which, in its more developed forms, appeals to the imaginative child up to adolescence. What wonderful things happen in the pages of Grimm and Andersen! Ugly ducklings grow into swans, neglected stepdaughters marry princes, poor people become fabulously wealthy, disagreeable people are invariably punished, and good people are just as invariably rewarded.

And it is not alone the fairy tale that pictures for the child the land of heart's desire. Stories even much less fanciful depend for their appeal upon the vividness with which they picture something that the child would like to do or to be. What boy or girl would not yearn to be one of Ernest Thompson-Seton's *Two Little Savages.*

4. Strong Heroic Characters: Boys like to read of strength, skill, and courage, of Robin Hood with his unerring bow and arrow, of D'Artagnan with his skill with the sword, of the splendid Indian, Chingachgook, who was so skilful in woodcraft, and girls are not far behind in their admiration of heroism. This tendency

to hero worship in childhood may be used to develop character. Children will be much more easily influenced for the better by reading of some thoroughly admirable hero than by any amount of moralizing.

5. Sentiment: *Children take considerable satisfaction from sentiment, although the fact is sometimes not recognized.* They are quick to scorn and quick to love; they have a very real sympathy for those who are down-trodden; and they will sometimes be deeply affected by such tragedies as the death of Little Eva. This is the reason that stories of the type of *Black Beauty* and the death of Little Nell from the *Old Curiosity Shop* are such favourites with children. It is the common belief that girls are more open to the appeal of sentiment than boys, but most boys are genuinely affected by such stories, especially when their sense of chivalry is touched.

Literature of Knowledge

Children, especially those of a high grade of intelligence, are intensely curious about the world at large. They are constantly asking questions, constantly exploring and experimenting, and are keenly interested in the most unexpected things. This genuine desire for knowledge should be encouraged and should be satisfied by the right sort of books. There will be a wide variety of taste, some children being interested in history, some in science, some in other countries and other peoples, and some even in music or art. Each child should be encouraged to follow his natural bent in choosing his informative reading. Simple history stories, simple biographies, simple accounts of scientific discoveries and of how to make things, picturesque descriptions of foreign lands and foreign peoples, and interesting stories

of artists and musicians should be plentifully provided. Those children are lucky who have access to a good public or private library where they may browse about and read whatever takes their fancy.

The teacher of a class of children who come from intelligent homes is frequently startled by the unexpected knowledge of his pupils on all sorts of topics. Children in a modern class are subjected in groups to educational influences and possibly suffer from lack of individual attention, but this fault can be partly overcome by the right sort of reading material. The individuality of each child, his peculiar tastes and capacities, may be discovered and developed; and he may be made aware, through the proper books, of his own inherent leanings.

CHAPTER V

A GENERAL SURVEY

Richard le Gallienne once wrote an essay on "How to Get the Best out of Books." The title is a good one. It suggests to us our next problem. In the preceding Chapters the choice of material for the child's reading was discussed; it remains to consider how that material is to be presented, how, that is to say, the child is to be helped to get the best out of books.

A glance at how the cultured reader, the genuine book lover, succeeds in getting the best out of books will help us to solve the problem. Such a reader, we should first observe, does not do all his reading with the same thoroughness. Some books he will skim through very rapidly; other books he will read and study and read again, dwelling at length on every profound or beautiful thought. Newspapers, magazine articles, and stories, the lighter novels—all these he may read with relish, but quite rapidly. They do not deserve careful study; they frequently, indeed, lose something of their freshness if subjected to close scrutiny.

But heavier books of information which demand close attention, collections of poems which must be read and dreamed over, the more permanent novels which are so rich in characterization that the reader feels he must return to them again and again for closer acquaintance with their people—to all these he may devote thorough study. As Bacon said centuries ago: "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested."

Nor is the method of perusal always determined by the nature of the reading material; no reader, however

painstaking, will study closely all the worth-while books he reads. Life is too short, and too many good books offer themselves. Furthermore, there is the factor of individual taste and purpose. The book that to one man is worth only a quick survey—a survey that will give him the gist of its thought—for another, who finds in it something of deep import to himself, may become a life-long companion. A general acquaintance with the broad fields of literature will give one much pleasure, will help to enlarge one's mind, will broaden one's outlook; but the truly cultured person will cull from the wide range of his reading some few books or some few authors to make peculiarly his own by frequent reading and much study.

These two methods of reading are recognized in our school work. By what we call extensive reading we encourage the child to wander on a sort of voyage of discovery through the world of books. By what we call intensive study we encourage him to read a few selections until they become as familiar and as dear to him as the things about his own home. The extensive method of reading will be dealt with separately in Chapter XIV, the intensive method in Chapters VI to XI. As a basis for our method of both extensive and intensive reading, let us look further at the method employed by the cultured reader.

For the purpose of our examination, let us place this real book lover in front of his grate fire with a book of Wordsworth's poems in his hand. He turns the pages slowly, dipping into them here and there, until his eye falls on *The Solitary Reaper*. We watch him closely as he reads, trying to enter as well as we can into his thoughts. We observe that he does not hurry. He reads a verse and maybe raises his eyes to think about it. He is

looking at the flames as they rise and fall, but his mind is far away with Wordsworth among the Scottish hills. He sees the Highland girl, sturdy and handsome, reaping in the field with slow rhythmic motion; and as her figure becomes clearer before his eyes, he catches the notes of her song, that melodious strain so natural and spontaneous, so full and rich that the valley is overflowing with the sound.

As he goes on to the next verse, he hears in fancy the clear liquid note of the nightingale, blessing with its softness and coolness the ears of travellers resting in the quiet of the evening after a long hot march across the Arabian desert. And then his mind, borne away by the succeeding metaphor, travels to the damp cold valleys of the Hebrides, and, recalling the length and bitterness of the northern winter, he is thrilled as he hears in fancy the soft fresh note of the cuckoo bird heralding the approach of spring. What his ear has caught of the beauty of these bird voices makes more real for him, more fresh and beautiful, the song of the solitary reaper.

With the reading of the next verse whither will his thoughts wander? It is difficult to say. In every poem there is something that is specific and something that is universal, something that is temporal and something that is eternal. Up to this point the book lover has been trying to reproduce in imagination the scene that Wordsworth saw, the song that Wordsworth heard; but from here on his mind will be occupied with thoughts that reach beyond the bounds of the actual scene depicted. What will these thoughts be? Will he recall with poignant vividness some loss or pain of his own? Will he see that the natural sorrows of to-day are of the same sort, are fabricated of the same warp and woof,

as the sorrows of all days and of all peoples? Will he feel something of the community of sadness in human life? Will he catch the echoes of what Wordsworth has elsewhere called "the still sad music of humanity"? The power of these lines is haunting but elusive, and in following our book lover we have entered regions that are intimate and personal.

And so his mind travels to the last verse, and he wonders if there is an ulterior meaning in the words:

> Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
> As if her song could have no ending.

Interpreted literally the lines undoubtedly mean, either that the girl was singing one of those old ballads that go on and on from verse to verse with apparently no end, or else that she was singing the same words over and over again. Wordsworth, who knew no Gaelic, could not be sure. But our book lover may wonder if there is a meaning behind the literal one. Did Wordsworth intend to suggest that such an experience of beauty is something of eternal value in human life? Did he mean that at least in his own memory the melancholy sweetness of the maiden's voice could have no ending? Pondering over this thought, the book lover will read to the end; and it is quite possible that he, like Wordsworth, will carry in his heart the music of the maiden's song "long after it is heard no more."

Now let us observe what has happened. The poem, which was at first nothing but printer's ink and paper, has come to life in the book lover's mind. The process of reading was in a sense creative. Unlike enjoyment of the "movies," where the spectator sits in a passive state watching the story develop before his eyes, it required of the reader a certain mental effort. At times his

intellect was intensely active. He pondered and surmised as he meditated over some of the deep things of human life.

But the effort required of him was not only one of thought. It involved also the imagination and the emotions. As he considered carefully the true significance of the poem, he had also to provide his own movie machine to flash vividly on the screen of his imagination the pictures that Wordsworth saw. And all through the reading of the poem his feelings were deeply stirred.

That the reading of literature requires thought is usually recognized; that it requires imagination and emotion, however, is too frequently overlooked. Yet to the real appreciation of a poem, this imagination and this emotion are quite as essential—some would say more essential—than thought. The poem which was created in the mind of our book lover was a complex thing, produced by the combined action of thought, of feeling, and of fancy.

Demanding an activity of mind, the act of reading is found wearisome by the mentally indolent, but it was far other to our book lover. No pleasanter way of spending the evening could have been devised for him. He was amply repaid for his small effort by the pleasure he derived from his reading. There was a pleasure for him in the sound of the words, in their suggestive power, in the imagery—a pleasure which no doubt induced him to read over and over again some particularly beautiful lines.

But there was for him a still deeper enjoyment. As he read he was carried out of himself. He saw a new beauty, a new significance, in life; he felt "the joy of elevated thoughts." The emotions that were aroused in him were the same emotions, softened and enriched by

the poet's guidance, which he has felt in his own exalted moments. In short the satisfaction he received from his reading was to a certain extent a literary satisfaction; but to a much larger extent it was the satisfaction which he would get from his own experiences and from the contemplation of the people and the things about him—the satisfaction which he would get from life.

All this may seem quite self-evident. What we have done is simply to look into the mind of a lover of books to see how he has got the best out of one simple poem, and what that best really is. But simple as these observations are, they make the basis of any successful teaching of literature. When a literature lesson falls short of success, it is almost invariably because the teacher has failed to realize what true reading is, and has tried to get from the selection under consideration something quite different from what the author intended, something far other than the best. Literature is not lists of words; it is not mere figures of speech; it is not morals; it is not a host of facts about the author's life or the historic background. Literature is life reflected in the minds of sensitive and thoughtful men and women; and the interest which draws us into books should be the same interest as makes us enjoy living.

Why do teachers so frequently go astray in deciding what is the best to be brought out of a selection? Sometimes, undoubtedly, it is because they themselves lack the ability or the culture necessary for true reading. If this is the cause of their failure, no one can give them much help otherwise than by advising them to endeavour, by following some course of reading themselves, to overcome the deficiency.

But this is not the only cause of error. All too frequently a teacher fails to bring anything vital out of a

selection because he has a mistaken notion as to what aspects of it are worthy of attention. He feels that, since a piece of literature is being read in school, its function must never be to give pleasure but always to instruct. Like our grandfathers, he holds that only a disagreeable medicine is good for children, and the more disagreeable the better. Many young teachers who are full of life and very human out of school, when they open a reader before a class are immediately transformed into dry-as-dust pedagogues. To hear them quizzing their pupils about topics and meanings, figures of speech and morals, one would think that they themselves had never enjoyed hearing the wind in the tree-tops or seeing the sunlight dancing on the water; that they had never made friends and lost friends, nor experienced any of the things about which a poet writes. And one could never believe that these proper and forbidding young persons could sit for hours before a grate fire completely engrossed in some thrilling tale of adventure or some fascinating story of romance.

A little boy was asked: "What is literature?" "Literature," he replied, "is meanin's." In his small mind there doubtless came up the memory of endless questions of detailed interpretations, of lesson periods without any spark of enjoyment, without any suggestion of that expansion of the mind which the book lover experienced as he read *The Solitary Reaper*. Wearied by a tiresome insistence on verbal interpretations, the boy has figured out for himself that literature is just another of the ills this flesh is heir to—it is just "meanin's"!

The teaching of literature is different from the teaching of most other subjects. In literature it is impossible to lay down any rigid scheme of questioning

or of procedure to be applied slavishly in the study of every selection. The variety of material to be dealt with is very great. Suggestions as to methods of procedure and methods of questioning will be given in succeeding Chapters; but it should be borne in mind always that the value of such suggestions is limited. Each new lesson will present a fresh problem to the teacher, and the only one who can successfully solve that problem is himself. If the teacher has succeeded in understanding fully and appreciating the selection, and if he aims at helping his class to get from it the enjoyment which he himself has got, a successful lesson will usually be the result. But if he has not been able to get anything from the selection of real interest to himself, no amount of instruction in lesson procedure or in questioning will show him how to help his pupils.

CHAPTER VI

TYPICAL LESSON PLANS

COMPLETE lesson plans are included at this point for two reasons.

1. It is hoped that they will serve as models for the student in making out his own plans before the principles involved have been dealt with in class.

2. It is intended that they should illustrate the general character of the literature lesson and of the reading lesson, as a basis for the discussion of lesson procedure which follows in the succeeding Chapters.

THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE

(First Reader, page 35)

I. **Aim:** To train the pupils to read a story with pleasure.

II. **Preparation:** The pupils will be asked to look at the picture. Which is the hare? What is a hare like? (It is a sort of rabbit. It is larger than an ordinary rabbit and can run very fast.)

Which is the tortoise? What is the tortoise like? (It is like a mud-turtle.)

Have a pupil describe how a mud-turtle walks.

III. **Statement of Problem:** Let us read the story to find out what the picture means.

IV. **Presentation:**

MATTER	METHOD
The Hare and the Tortoise *The Interpretation of the Story* (*a*) The General Thought The tortoise, though a slower runner, wins the race by sticking at it.	The pupils will read the story silently. Whom is the story about? What do they do? Who is the judge of the race? Who wins the race? Why did he win?
(*b*) The Detail. The language is very simple. Only one or two difficulties occur: "overtook"—caught up to "flows through the city"—runs through the city.	The teacher says: Now let us look at the story more closely. Read the first page once more. Where did the Hare and the Tortoise meet? What does "overtook" mean? What did the Hare ask the Tortoise? What did the Tortoise reply? Read the reply of the Tortoise.
But every point in the story must be brought out by questions, as indicated in the Method column.	Now, turn the page and read three more paragraphs carefully. When he heard where the Tortoise was going, what did the Hare say? What boast did he make? What does the Tortoise offer to do? Who is to be judge? And so the detailed questioning proceeds to the end.

V. **Application:** The teacher says: From this story we may learn something. What may we learn?

The pupils may have different ideas as to what might be learned from the story. Various answers should be received.

HOME THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

(Fourth Reader, page 157)

I. **Aim:** To lead the pupils to understand and to sympathize with Browning's longing to be at home in England in the spring time.

II. **Preparation:** The teacher asks: Who have been homesick? Where were you at the time? Where did you wish to be?

III. **Statement of Problem:** The teacher says: Let us find out how a poet expresses his feeling of homesickness.

IV. **Presentation:**

MATTER

Home Thoughts, From Abroad

The Interpretation of the Poem

The general thought and feeling of the poem:

The poet, who is in Italy, becomes homesick for England when spring arrives, and pictures to himself the trees and birds and flowers about his old home (*a*) in April, (*b*) in May.

The meaning of difficult passages:

"The brushwood sheaf round the elm tree bole"—a cluster of low shoots round the trunk of the elm tree.

"the chaffinch" — a brightly-coloured little bird with a pretty song.

METHOD

The teacher reads the poem simply but expressively.

The following are the teacher's questions and comments:

Where is the poet as he writes this poem? What tells us that he is away from home? As a matter of fact, Browning was in Italy at the time. His wife was ill, and it would have been dangerous for her to return to England. Where does the poet wish to be? Why does he wish to be in England? The teacher has some pupil read the lines to bring out the poet's feeling. When he thinks of England in April, what scene returns to his memory?

Now let us try to picture the scene in detail. What does he see that is typical of spring?

What is in tiny leaf? What is the brushwood sheaf? What is the elm tree bole? With a piece of chalk sketch the elm tree, showing the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf.

As the poet sees in imagination this tree in tiny leaf, what does he seem to hear? Where is the chaffinch singing? The teacher will describe the chaffinch as a brightly-coloured little bird with a pretty song. Now describe the scene that came into the poet's mind when he thought of England in April.

"at the bent spray's edge"—where the limbs of the pear-tree, all covered with white blossoms, bend over like jets of spray.

"hoary dew"—the dew on the grass looks gray in the light of the morning.

"the little children's dower"—a treasure for little children.

(Other passages will be dealt with if it is felt that the pupils have not understood them.)

But the glimpse of England in April is not the only picture that comes into the poet's imagination. What other picture does he see? What things does he love in the month of May? Which bird does he seem to like best? Why does he like the thrush? Read the lines in which he describes the thrush's song. What flowers are mentioned?

Describe the pear-tree. As you read the phrase "at the bent spray's edge," what do you seem to see? What other flower does the poet see? Read the words that tell us that. What is the ordinary meaning of dower? What does it mean here?

If you were away from home, away off in some foreign country, you might have a touch of

The Appreciation of the Poem

The poem is a free and natural expression of feeling. Its music and its imagery are very fine. The beauty of such passages as the following should be especially stressed:

"While the chaffinch sings
on the orchard bough
In England—now!"

(The child should feel the yearning expressed in the word "now!")

"Hark! where my blossomed
pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops"—

(The child should be brought to feel the delicacy and loveliness of this glimpse—the beauty of the flowers coupled with the thrilling happiness of the bird.)

"That's the wise thrush;
he sings each song twice
over,
"Lest you should think he
never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture."

(The child's ear should catch the double rhyme of "recapture" and "rapture," and the lengthening of the last line produced by the fact that almost every syllable is accented.)

homesickness, too. If you felt homesick and thought of Canada, what memories do you suppose would come back to your mind?

From the poem pick out the lines which would make you wish most to be in England in spring. Read the lines you have chosen to the class in such a way as to make us all wish to be there.

What lines in the poem paint the loveliest picture? Read those lines so that we may all see the picture. As those lines were read, what picture did you seem to see?

Find a passage that is so full of music that you wish to read it simply for the sound. Read the lines you have chosen, while we all look away from our books and listen.

"Far brighter than this
gaudy melon-flower!"

(The child should be made to see the contrast between the dainty beauty of the English flower and the flaunting over-bright opulent beauty of the Italian.)

V. **Recapitulation:** The class should be led to discuss why the poet wished to be in England, and two or three pupils might be required to read the whole poem aloud.

The two following examples illustrate a simpler form of the literature lesson plan:

THE WIND AND THE LEAVES
(First Book, page 49)

1. **Aim:** To give the pupils an appreciation of the beauties of nature.

II. **Preparation:** What season of the year is this? (The poem should be studied in the autumn.)

Why do we sometimes call it fall?

III. **Statement of Problem:** How does the poet describe the falling of the leaves?

IV. **Presentation:** The teacher will first read the whole poem aloud, and then the pupils will read it themselves carefully as the questioning proceeds.

Select all the phrases that make you think of autumn. (The leaves have "dresses of red and gold," "Summer is gone," "the days grow cold," "Down they came fluttering, one and all;" (etc.).

According to the poet's fancy, why do the leaves fall? (The wind calls them.)

What does the wind wish them to do? What does the wind mean by, "Put on your dresses of red and gold"? When the leaves hear the wind's loud call, what do they do? When they are tired of playing, what do they do? What was put over them as a blanket?

V. **Recapitulation:** Let us pretend we are going to make a picture of the leaves falling. What should we put in our picture?

THE IRREPARABLE PAST
(Fourth Reader, page 396)

1. **Aim:** To lead the pupils, by a careful study of the selection, to think seriously about the opportunities of youth.

II. **Preparation:** What is the purpose of a sermon in church? How does a preacher usually begin his sermon? (With a text from the Bible)

In the Reader is a sermon written by a famous preacher.

III. **Statement of Problem:** Let us read this sermon to see what this great preacher is trying to teach us.

IV. **Presentation:**

1. Reading the selection

The selection should be read silently by the pupils.

2. Interpreting the selection

(*a*) *The General Idea*:

What is the text of the sermon? Who is it that speaks? To whom was He speaking? What were the circumstances? In what way are Christ's words different from the words of other men? (They do not end with the occasion which called them forth).

What is the eternal truth which the preacher finds in these words? To whom does the preacher especially direct his sermon?

(*b*) *The More Detailed Study:*

The comparison between the period of youth and the disciples resting in the Garden of Gethsemane should be made quite clear. This comparison is the basis of the sermon.

What similarity does the preacher find between the period of youth and the disciples resting in the Garden of Gethsemane? This point is brought out in the sentence: "The young are by God's Providence, exempted in a great measure from anxiety; they are as the apostles were in relation to their Master: their friends stand between them and the struggle for existence."

The class should then be required to discover what lessons the preacher is trying to impart to young people, He advises young people:

1. Not to let their young days pass idly and uselessly away.

2. To learn docility, gentleness of temper, reverence, submission.

The phraseology should be dealt with as is found necessary in searching for the thought.

V. **Application:** The pupils should be asked to suggest ways in which they can put into practice the preacher's advice.

Explanatory Notes

In studying the above plans the student should notice the following points:

I. Aim: In the statement of the aim only the main purpose of the lesson is stressed.

II. Preparation: The preparatory step is made as simple as possible. In studying many selections, especially stories, this step of the lesson may be dispensed with altogether.

III. Problem. The pupil should have before him some reason for examining the selection closely.

IV. Presentation: The study of the selection is dealt with where necessary under two headings—The Interpretation and The Appreciation—but it should be observed that these headings do not represent separate stages of the lesson. Although towards the first of the discussion, interpretation is stressed more than appreciation, and towards the last appreciation more than interpretation, the two processes advance together.

The meaning of particular passages is dealt with as the need arises, but an effort is made to keep the lesson from degenerating into a mere "meanings" lesson. In fact the question—"What is the meaning of that word?" (although it is a perfectly good question occasionally,) is avoided as much as possible. The separate passages are dealt with in such a way as to make the child look at them from the point of view of the whole poem. When the lesson is finished, the child should recall, not so much the detail, as the thought and feeling of the whole poem.

The Appreciation of the Poem is put down in the plan so that it will not be forgotten. The student should remember, however, that it is possible to show in a plan only a suggestion of what can be accomplished towards making the pupils enjoy a poem. The teacher's

personal attitude towards the selection will affect very strongly the spirit of the lesson, and, if he is a good teacher of literature, the inspiration he receives from actual contact with the class will take him beyond the confines of his plan.

V. Application: In this portion of the lesson there should be either general questions in recapitulation, or some other form of expression.

Oral Reading Plan

How Mr. Pickwick Undertook to Drive

(Third Book, from the beginning to the top of page 85)

I. Aim: To develop in the pupils the power of reading this passage with some dramatic effect.

II. Preparation: Whom is this story about? Where are they when the story opens? What are they planning to do? Who is the leader of the party? What sort of man is Mr. Pickwick? Who undertakes to ride on horseback? What sort of man is Mr. Winkle? Who advises them how to go? What sort of man is the waiter?

III. Statement of Problem: We are going to do our best to read this story so that the scene will seem real. We must especially try to make those who are listening understand what each of the characters is like.

IV. Presentation:

Matter	Method
General Procedure:	
How Mr. Pickwick Undertook to Drive—(from the beginning to the top of page 85, or as far as time permits)	About six or seven lines will be read at a time. The pupils will first read each section silently. If they encounter any

words that they cannot pronounce, these will be written on the board, if necessary, in syllables, and be carefully pronounced by several pupils.

The teacher will next ask a question or two to see that the pupils realize the sense of what they are about to read; and then one child will be called upon to read aloud.

The teacher will make suggestions, and if there is room for improvement, the child will read again. Three or four pupils will be called upon to read each section aloud.

Illustrations of Questioning for Improvement of Reading:

(It is understood that some such questioning as is indicated below will be used in each case only if the child fails to use the proper expression.)

(1) "They sat down to the meal; and broiled ham, eggs, tea, and coffee began to disappear with a rapidity which at once bore testimony to the excellence of the fare and the appetite of its consumers."

(The articles on the menu should be enumerated in a way to make one's mouth water, the list being read slowly and with relish. The balanced phrases "excellence of the fare" and "appetite of its consumers" should be brought out by emphasis.)

What did they have for breakfast? If you were hungry what would you think of such a breakfast? By reading you must show that every one of those things was appetizing.

How did Mr. Pickwick and his friends enjoy their breakfast? What two things made them enjoy it? When you read bring out the idea that they enjoyed it for those reasons.

(2) "Dingley Dell, gentlemen?" said he. "Fifteen miles, gentlemen — cross-road — post-chaise, sir?"

(The waiter speaks in a very deferential tone. The purpose of each of his phrases must be made clear. He *tells* them that Dingley Dell is fifteen miles away at a cross-road, and then he *asks* them if they want a post-chaise. "Post-chaise, sir?" should be read as a question.)

How does the waiter act toward the guests? We must show by our reading that he is very polite. What is he telling them when he says "Fifteen miles, gentlemen?" When he says "cross-road?" Why does he say "post-chaise, sir?" We must show by our reading that he is asking them if they will go by "post-chaise."

(3) "Post-chaise won't hold more than two," said Mr. Pickwick.

(The words "post-chaise" and "two" should be strongly emphasized.)

How many were there in the party? How many would the post-chaise hold? Read this to show that the post-chaise won't do at all.

(4) "What's to be done?" said Mr. Snodgrass.

(This should be read in a tone of great perplexity.)

When they realize that even the four-wheeled chaise is not big enough, how does Mr. Snodgrass feel? Read what he says to show us that he is quite perplexed.

(5) "The very thing," said Mr. Pickwick.

(This should be read in a tone of enthusiasm.)

How does the waiter's suggestion strike Mr. Pickwick? Read the sentence to show what he thought of it.

When four or five paragraphs have been read, some one will be called upon to read them all; and when the lesson period is nearly over, pupils will be chosen to take the several parts, and to read all that has been covered.

V. **Recapitulation:**

In the above plan students should observe the following points:

1. Since the oral reading lesson always follows the literature lesson, the introduction to the oral reading lesson should be a very rapid review of what has been learned in the literature lesson. Three or four questions on the general thought of the selection will usually suffice—just enough to induce the pupils to recall the selection in a general way and to get them in the right frame of mind for reading it.

2. The method of dealing with each section is not indicated, because that would mean a great deal of repetition. Instead of showing how each section in succession is to be treated, the plan outlines the general procedure to be followed throughout the lesson, and then it shows in detail how typical sentences are to be dealt with.

3. In the Matter column such technical words as "emphasis," "inflection" may be freely used, but in the Method such words are avoided. In so far as possible the child is induced to read more expressively by being made to realize the sense of what he is reading.

CHAPTER VII

JUNIOR METHOD

SINCE intercourse with books is largely dependent on the ability to read, the teacher's first task is to instruct his pupils in the art of recognizing words and getting thoughts from the printed page. This task occupies a large part of his time in the primary grade, and is dealt with in a separate Manual.

The real introduction to literature, however, need not wait until the child has finished his struggle with phonics and sight words and all the other intricacies of primary reading; he may be made to feel something of the charm of books from his first entry into the school. Picture books may be put into his hands, and although he cannot read himself, he can listen to stories told or read by the teacher, and he can learn to appreciate poetry as poetry was appreciated in ancient days—by listening to the recitation of it and by learning it by heart.

PICTURE BOOKS

Every primary teacher should have a supply of picture books in his room. This supply may be augmented by having the children bring to school such picture books as they have at home. With these the teacher may develop in the child the right attitude towards books in general. He should begin by making him feel that books are precious things and should be treated with respect. They should not be smudged by dirty fingers or defaced by pencil or crayon marks, nor should they be thrown about or torn.

He should, further, make the child feel that it is not a task but a privilege to look at these books. He should not say, "You *must* look at such and such a book," but rather, "When your number work or your phonic seat work is finished, you *may* look at this picture book." If the teacher is tactful in his use of picture books, he can arouse in the child a real love for books and inspire him with a genuine desire to read for himself.

Stories

There are two methods of presenting stories to children—reading the story from the book, or telling it in one's own words. Each method has its own value. When the teacher reads the story from the book, the child realizes what books contain, and he sees what he himself might get from books if he could read. But, although all children love to hear stories read, they like better to hear them told. When the teacher is unencumbered with a book, he can talk to the class more freely, more intimately. The atmosphere of formality is completely gone, the restraint that exists between teacher and taught is dispelled, and there remains only the age-old relationship of story-teller and listener. In short, the teacher should sometimes read to his class, but more often he should simply tell the story. Since, however, the ultimate aim of story-telling is to induce the pupils to read for themselves, he may follow the story lesson by sending the pupils to the book in which the story is to be found.

It is very difficult in a Manual to give hints on the art of story-telling. The story-teller's charm is largely a matter of personality. Some people are able to tell a story well, some are not—that is almost, but not quite

all that may be said on the matter. One or two hints, superfluous to the experienced story-teller but more or less valuable to the novice, may be added. The story-teller, it might be suggested, should talk to the class, not to the corner of the room. If he does not look at the children as he tells his story, he will miss that greatest inspiration of the story-teller, the rapt look of attention on the listeners' faces.

In his bearing and gestures the teacher, above everything else, should be natural. The child's attention should not be distracted from the story by any artificialities of voice or manner. What gestures, what expressions of the face, what modulations of the voice the story-teller is to use cannot be governed by rules. Hamlet's advice to the players might be handed on to the story-teller: "Let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this a special observance that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature."

The good story-teller is the one who knows a good story and enjoys it himself. The teacher who does not see anything in the story to be told, who looks on it as silly and childish, cannot expect to bring anything out of it. There is no law compelling a teacher to use one story or another. Let him choose a story he himself likes, and let him tell it as if he enjoyed it quite as much as the pupils.

Complete memorization of a story is, as a rule, not possible. The busy teacher of a large class or an ungraded school will very seldom have time to memorize a whole story. Poetry can be learned with comparative ease, but prose, because there is no rhyme or rhythm to assist the memory, is difficult to learn word for word. In most cases, moreover, it is doubtful if

the advantages of memorization repay the teacher for his effort. The story-teller who is searching his brain for the exact words of the original story is apt to be halting and strained in his manner. It is usually best for the teacher to acquaint himself thoroughly with the general course of the story and to depend for the language on his own powers of expression.

Memorization, however, is not without its value. The original language of the story is, no doubt, to be preferred to any impromptu rendering by the teacher; and often it is impossible to depart from the original phraseology without destroying something of the charm.

When a story is of the cumulative type or when it involves the frequent repetition of a certain formula of words (as for instance what the bears say in the story of *Goldilocks*), it is desirable that the original words be preserved, at least at the crucial points. And some teachers feel that stories from the Bible and many of the other old favourites are most effective if told as nearly as possible in the original form.

Before leaving the subject of stories, a distinction should be made. Stories are used in junior grades for two purposes. In the composition class they are used for the language training involved in reproduction; whereas in literature the story is used to give the child pleasure and to develop in him a desire to read for himself. The difference in purpose implies a slight difference in method. The story told in the literature period should not be reproduced. If the teacher desires, he may talk over certain points with the pupils, bringing out what he thinks they may have missed, but the less formal the procedure the better. The story-telling

period which aims not at language training but at appreciation, should be a relief and a pleasure for both pupils and teacher.

Rhymes and Verses

In the early stages the rhymes and verses are all dealt with orally. The teacher reads or recites the rhyme to the class, talks about it, questions the pupils about it, and tries to make it as interesting and as effective as possible. A picture will usually be helpful —indeed in most of the Mother Goose books the pictures are quite as important as the verses. When the rhyme is thoroughly understood, some attempt may be made to relate it to the child's activities. It may, for instance, be very readily correlated with art and manual training. The children may be asked to illustrate it with charcoal or plasticine. The dramatization of rhymes is another form of activity that will help to make them interesting.

But the best way of impressing a rhyme on the child's mind is by having him memorize it. The memorization should be entirely oral. The teacher should recite the rhyme two or three times while the children listen. He should then require them, one at a time to repeat it. Unless the rhyme is altogether too long, (as long, for instance, as *Old Mother Hubbard*) it should not be broken up. Memorization of the whole has been proved to be easier than memorization by parts. To help the child's memory the teacher should make him think of the story.

Whom is the story about? What happened first? What happened next? And then what happened?

And as a further aid to memory the teacher should permit, in fact encourage the pupils to accentuate the rhythm.

Let us suppose that *Little Miss Muffet* is to be taught in a Primary class. The teacher might begin by showing a picture of Miss Muffet.

What is the little girl doing? What do you suppose she has in her bowl?

And then the teacher should repeat the rhyme two or three times.

Find the "tuffet" in the picture. What is a tuffet? Who have eaten curds and whey? What is it like? Why did Miss Muffet not finish her curds and whey?

In relating the rhyme to the child's activities, the teacher should not use all the following suggestions, but should choose one or two, reserving the others for lessons on other rhymes.

Manual Work and Art: The pupils might be asked to model in plasticine Miss Muffet's bowl or the spider, or to draw a picture of Miss Muffet running away.

Dramatization: The pupils should choose the cast and arrange the scene.

Who would like to be Miss Muffet? The spider? What will do for the tuffet?

The corner of the platform makes a very good tuffet.

What will serve as a bowl of curds and whey?

An empty chalk box does quite well.

When everything is arranged, the pupils chosen should proceed with the pantomime, and when they have finished their acting they should be criticised.

How might the acting have been improved? Some pupil may suggest that Miss Muffet did not look frightened enough, or that the spider should have come up more quietly, working his fingers all the time so that he would look more "creepy and crawly." And then the scene should be enacted once more.

Memorization: After repeating the rhyme two or three times, the teacher should have a pupil attempt to say it. If he gets as far as:

Little Miss Muffet
Sat on a tuffet—

and then stops, the teacher might ask, What was she doing? When the child has struggled through to the end or has hopelessly failed, the teacher should repeat the whole rhyme once more, and so on until all the pupils have committed it to memory.

LESSONS FROM THE READER

As the child progresses in his ability to recognize words, although some rhymes and stories are still presented orally, the emphasis gradually shifts to the study of selections from books. It might seem more accurate to call these early lessons from the Reader silent reading lessons rather than literature lessons. The selections studied are very simple, and the teacher's purpose is largely to see that the children get the ideas from the printed page. But simple as these lessons are they are the child's introduction to the study of literature, and as such they must be dealt with here.

The method of presentation should be as simple as the selections themselves. The selection should be read

from beginning to end by the pupils or the teacher—possibly by both, the pupils first and then the teacher.

The teacher should then question the pupils to see that they have got the thought of the whole and of the details. He should not try to urge the children too quickly, nor should he expect much in the way of appreciation. He must remember that his class is still having difficulty with word recognition. Frequently their failure to get the thought is due simply to their inability to recognize the words rapidly enough to grasp the meaning of the sentences as a whole. Nothing but practice will give them facility in the mechanical side of reading. Meanwhile the teacher must be patient, and must concentrate his attention on seeing that they get that practice without losing the love of books which his story-telling has inspired.

The following lesson may be taken as illustrative of the method at this stage.

SPRING WAKING

(First Book, page 96)

This poem should be studied very early in the spring. It should be read through by the teacher, and then carefully, stanza by stanza, by the pupils as it is studied.

Whom is the poem about? What is a snowdrop like? When do snowdrops appear?

The poem should then be dealt with line by line.

Where was the snowdrop? Who called her? Did she come out immediately?

Read the words that tell us that she didn't. And what did the Sun think? What did he say? When the snowdrop heard him say that, what did she do? And then what did the Sun say? What does that mean?

Why did the little flower not hurry? What did she say? Read what the Sun said then. What did he mean by that?

And so the questioning should proceed to the end. The inexperienced teacher may perhaps regard such painstaking work as too laborious, but it is necessary. The pupils must walk before they can run. So long as they are still having difficulty with word recognition, they must not be unduly hurried.

The last stanza might be dealt with as follows:

In the first line of the last stanza what is the snowdrop called? Why is it called a nightcap? When the flower appeared, what happened?

And, finally, the whole story should be reviewed by questions which will bring out just the main points.

CHAPTER VIII

PREPARATION

Before the Lesson

A clear recognition of what the child is able to do, and of what he is not able to do in preparing himself for the literature lesson is necessary for the making of useful assignments. Frequently he achieves nothing in the preparatory study but to weary himself of the selection without accomplishing anything of real value.

Two forms of assignment are very common in practice. The teacher, especially in the ungraded schools, usually asks his pupils either to read over the selection in preparation for the literature lesson, or "to look up the meanings of the hard words." Frequently, indeed, he asks his class to do both. Let us examine these two forms of assignment to see what is their real value.

What good does the child receive from "looking up the hard words"? Some arguments are advanced in favour of this form of preparation. It is pointed out, for instance, that the pupils are apt to attach more importance to a lesson for which they have to make some preparation. Arithmetic, which lends itself to seat work exercises, and geography, in which there is so much definitely to be learned, are likely to occupy a much larger place in the child's attention than literature, which is quite as important but less definite and formidable. The mere fact, it is argued, that the child has to do a certain task in preparation for a literature lesson, will convince him, though perhaps in a false way, of the importance of the subject. To this indirect

argument is usually added the plea that in "looking up the hard words" the child receives training in the use of the dictionary.

So much may be put forward in defence of this form of assignment, but much may be said against it. If the child were able to read the selection intelligently, and then, with his mind full of its thought and feeling would consider the difficult words in their proper context, the exercises would be of real value; but it would take a child of much more than average intelligence to be able to do this, and of remarkable conscientiousness even to attempt it. What he usually does is to take the given words with, at best, only slight regard to context, and to attach to them the first or the most striking meaning suggested in the dictionary; and it is to be feared that in most cases neither the assigned word nor the attached meaning has for him the least real significance. In short, so mechanical is the exercise apt to become that its value is almost completely lost. Most teachers nowadays give the child training in the use of the dictionary in connection with the teaching of spelling or composition; and they try to make children take the subject of literature seriously, not by making it a bugbear, but by dealing with it in a fashion likely to arouse the greatest possible interest.

The assignment of the reading of a selection is more in accordance with the spirit of literature than the other assignment referred to above, and hence is rather more valuable; but here again the teacher must consider certain dangers. A story can be read by the pupils with understanding and interest—if it is in the Reader the pupils have probably read it already without being told —but most poems and the more difficult prose pieces will not be prepared so satisfactorily. In the child's

mind anything passes for reading. If he merely glances over a selection, he considers that he has followed the teacher's directions and will declare that he has actually read it.

The weakness of this assignment is its indefiniteness. If it is to result in any real preparation, it must be made more specific. Simple questions based on the content will make the child read with definite purpose. Or, if the teacher does not wish to burden his class with questions, the reading may be assigned, not the day before, but immediately preceding the literature period. When the child knows that the preparation he is making is to be followed immediately by questions, he is much more likely to do it thoroughly.

Although preliminary reading is a useful form of preparation, there is another that is, at least in the higher grades, even better. Certain selections in each of the Readers are related to matters that the class is studying in geography, history, or nature study. A correlation of these subjects with literature will naturally result, and independent work done following a lesson in one of them may well form a natural preparation for the related literature lesson. When, for instance, the pupils have been studying the preparation of plants for winter, they might be asked to observe the falling of the leaves. The results of their observations would be of value from the point of view of nature study, but would also serve as a preparation for the study of the poem, *How the Leaves Came Down.* Before a class reads *The Romance of Marquis Wheat* they might be asked to review those sections of the geography which deal with the production of wheat in the western provinces. And a class that is about to study Byron's poem, *Waterloo,*

would profit from reading the story of the battle in the history text-book or in a history reader.

During the Lesson

A famous art critic once said that a person gets from a great picture only what he brings to it. What is true of art is even more true of literature. To the understanding of any bit of literature we bring our store of experience and thought, and even the simplest selections take for granted a certain background of knowledge. Just here is where the child very frequently falls short. His experience has been narrow, his thoughts are immature. To the appreciation of the deeper passages of literature he cannot bring the necessary fund of knowledge or experience.

One important function of the introductory or preparatory step in the literature lesson, is to make up to a certain extent for this deficiency by providing the child with such a background of knowledge as will enable him to get at least something from the first reading of the selection.

The second important function of the introductory step in the literature lesson may be gathered from observing the book lover's method of reading. The lover of books suits his reading to his mood. When he finds himself in the right frame of mind for a tale of adventure, he takes down from his bookshelves a volume of Scott, Dumas, or Stevenson; when something inspires in him a longing for poetry, he reaches for a volume of Wordsworth, Browning, or Tennyson.

But the child cannot wait for the proper mood. He must read and study a selection when the teacher directs. And the teacher himself is handicapped in his attempts to harmonize the selection with the occasion.

He may take with his class in the spring time a piece inspired with the spirit of spring, and in the fall one which pictures the autumnal beauties of nature, but beyond such general attempts at making each selection more or less timely he cannot go. In the day's work, for instance, he must take literature when literature is set down on the time-table, despite the fact that this may mean plunging a class into the study of *Break, Break, Break,* when their thoughts are full of decimal fractions or the analysis of a compound sentence. Instead of fitting the selection to the mood, his one resort is to try to arouse the right mood for the given selection.

Hence, the second function of the introductory step is to put the class in a receptive attitude, and to create the right emotional atmosphere for a successful literature lesson.

But although the value of the introductory step is insisted on here, it should be remembered that such a step is not always necessary. When the selection demands no emotional preparation, and when the pupils already possess the necessary background of information, time should not be wasted on preliminaries.

ILLUSTRATIONS

How the teacher may make his introductory step effective may best be shown by illustrations. The following are examples of introductions suitable for lessons on certain selections from the Readers.

THE LAND OF NOD
(Second Reader, page 8)

This poem might be introduced by talking to the children about dreams. Have several pupils tell of dreams they have had.

Who of you recall any dream you have had? What was your dream? Describe some of the curious things you saw in your dream.

In the Reader there is a poem in which a little boy tells us about his dreams. It is called *The Land of Nod.* . . .

STORY OF A RED CROSS DOG
(Second Reader, page 119)

To prepare for the study of this story the teacher might talk about the cleverness of dogs.

Who has a dog? What kind of dog is he? What tricks can he do. What useful thing can he do?

Some dogs are trained to be of great use. Who has heard or read of a dog that was trained to be useful? What could he do?

Most dogs will try to guard their master's property, but some dogs are taught to do other tasks as well. Some dogs are trained to bring home the cows, others are trained for hunting, and still others are trained to draw carts in summer or sleighs in winter. In the Reader is the story of a dog that was very good and clever. . . .

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION
(Second Reader, page 183)

A teacher introduced this selection in the following manner. Before the pupils opened their books he asked: Who has ever applied for a job?

Four or five hands went up.

What job did you apply for? (Delivering newspapers)

Did you get the job? (Yes)

Why? (I got the job because the man in the office knew who I was and thought I would do it right.)

What job did you apply for? (Delivering parcels for a drug store)

Did you get the job? (Yes)

Why? (Because I had a bicycle.)

The teacher asked a third pupil: What job did you apply for? (Sweeping out a store)

Did you get the job? (No)

Why not? (A bigger boy was taken.)

The teacher then said that there was a selection in the Reader about some boys who were applying for a job. One of them got it and the class was to read to find out why. . . .

THE RIDE FOR LIFE
(Third Reader, page 34)

Before reading this story the pupils should know something about the character and habits of wolves.

What does a wolf look like? It is about the same size and colour as a Belgian police dog. And it is like the police dog in another way. Whereas the ears of most dogs droop over, the ears of the police dog and of the wolf stand up straight. But the wolf is not like a dog in disposition. Most dogs are good-natured and brave; but the wolf is fierce and cruel, and, when he is alone, very much of a coward. A lone wolf will never attack a man. But years ago, before this country was cleared of forest, the timber wolves used to gather in packs to hunt for food, and woe to any creature that came within their reach! In the Reader is a story of some people who were chased by a pack of wolves. . . .

DEPT. OF EDUCATION
HISTORICAL COLLECTION

HEAT

(Fourth Reader, page 284)

In introducing this poem the teacher might compare the poet's purpose with that of the artist.

Who has ever seen an artist at work? What was he painting?

Very often an artist will go into the country with his paints and his brushes to find a scene that will make a pretty picture. When he discovers some vista that appeals to him, he sets up his easel and goes to work. It is very interesting to watch him. At first the picture looks rough and confused. It seems like a mere mass of colours daubed on the canvas without purpose. But as the artist proceeds with his work, the colours take shape and meaning. Every touch of the brush brings out the scene with greater clearness, until, finally, it is all there on the canvas just as it appears in reality.

Archibald Lampman loved to make pictures. When he was alive, his home was in the city of Ottawa where he worked in the Postal Department; but in the evenings and on holidays he used to wander out into the country in search of interesting scenes to make into pictures. But, unlike the artists we have been talking about, he did not use paints to make his pictures. He used words, because he was not an artist but a poet. . . .

RECESSIONAL

(Fourth Reader, page 406)

On the sixtieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne there was held a great celebration of the whole British Empire, known as the Diamond Jubilee. The navy was called home from every sea, and the army was engaged in wonderful displays of

their might. Representatives from almost every nation of the world visited Britain to join in the festivities. Princes, kings, ministers, ambassadors—all the guests united in doing honour to the aged queen and to the empire over which she ruled. On no occasion had the grandeur and might of Britain been more evident. It was a time when national pride ran high, a time when thoughtless people might give way to boasting.

Rudyard Kipling, seeing the danger, wrote a poem in warning. It is called *Recessional.*

When is *Recessional* sung in church? When was this poem supposed to be sung? Yes, when all the people who had been gathered together were going off to their homes.

CHAPTER IX

PRESENTATION

The Reading

Unless the selection has been read by the pupils in preparation for the lesson, it should be read from beginning to end before it is studied. This preliminary reading will give the pupils a more or less clear idea as to the character and purpose of the selection and its general line of thought. Without some such preliminary survey of the whole it would be difficult for the pupils to discuss the details with intelligence. Each paragraph or stanza gets its full meaning only as part of a whole. Sometimes even the opening sentences cannot be understood in their entirety until the end is reached. A story, especially, demands complete reading. When the pupils are interested, they themselves, even if the teacher directs otherwise, will surreptitiously turn the pages and read to the end while the lesson is in progress. This tendency on their part is quite right and should be encouraged. No selection should be discussed until it has been read from beginning to end.

Who should do this reading is the next point to be considered. Some teachers advocate silent reading by the pupils; others argue for oral reading by the teacher. Each method of presentation has its own special value. The silent reading by the pupils has the advantage of giving them what they very much need, namely practice in reading. Skill in the mechanical processes of reading comes slowly and requires much practice. Many of the pupils' difficulties of interpretation arise merely from

the fact that they are reading so slowly and so laboriously that they cannot grasp the thread of the thought. Silent reading is particularly suitable for prose, especially for stories, and it should sometimes, for the sake of practice, be used also in the study of poetry.

Valuable as this method is, however, it should not be the only method of presentation. Oral reading by the teacher, although it does not give the pupils practice, should be used, especially in certain cases, because of its effectiveness.

Reading is not merely an intellectual exercise, it involves also an emotional reaction. The child who laboriously struggles through the recognition of words in a passage will not experience any emotion but one of weariness or bewilderment. It is here that oral reading by the teacher is useful. Its value is not in the fact that it relieves the child of the necessity of doing hard work, but that it creates for him an effect which he could not possibly produce for himself. Any work of art is best appreciated when it is allowed to speak for itself. No amount of discussion will ever impress the child so strongly or so vividly as the clear and natural reading of such a selection as *An Incident of the French Camp.*

In poetry, coupled very closely with the emotional effect, is the music. Poetry is meant to be read aloud. Its music cannot be fully appreciated, at least by children, unless it is heard. A grown-up person who has read a great deal of poetry may be able to hear with the ear of his imagination, as he reads silently, the effects of rhyme and rhythm, but the child is not capable of catching the voices that sing only to the inward ear. It is possible that one cause of the lack of popularity of poetry to-day, as compared with ancient times, is the

fact that it is so seldom read aloud. It is wise, occasionally, to let the child read even poetry to himself, but a safe rule is usually to present poetry by reading it aloud. Since this is true it is of the utmost importance that every teacher should be a good reader.

Interpretation

The purpose of the interpretative stage of the lesson is to help the child over his difficulties and to lead him to see in the selection something more than he could discern for himself. In preparing for the interpretation, the teacher's first task is to pick out such passages as will present some obstacle to comprehension. In doing this he must have regard to the age of his pupils. What would not be understood by a First Form child might be quite clear to those in the Third Form. The teacher's principal guide must be his own judgment. All that can be done to help him is to indicate the sorts of difficulties that present themselves to children.

In the first place the child is frequently puzzled by *unfamiliar phraseology*. The vocabulary, even of an older child, is limited. In his reading he is constantly coming on words that he has not met before, or words that are used in a different way from what he is accustomed to. A passage from Bacon's essay, *Of Studies*, will serve to illustrate both sorts of difficulties.

"Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business.

For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels and the plots, and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned."

The words "discourse," "expert," "execute," "counsels," "marshalling," although they are used in an ordinary way, may puzzle the child, because he is not familiar with them. But such a phrase as "judgment and disposition of business" contains an added difficulty. If Bacon said, "The judgment passed on the prisoner was severe," most Fourth Form pupils would understand him; similarly if he said, "His disposition is happy." But the words are used here in an odd old-fashioned way. He means to say that studies help one to judge shrewdly and to decide wisely in matters of business. Throughout this whole essay the word-difficulty is unusually prominent, because it is written in the English of Elizabeth's reign; yet almost any selection in the Readers will offer certain verbal perplexities to the class for whom it is intended.

But the problem of unfamiliar words is not the only one that confronts the child. Sometimes the vocabulary of a passage will be very simple, and yet its meaning will not be clear to the child. He frequently finds himself puzzled over figurative expressions—expressions that do not mean literally what they seem to mean. A child will follow Christina Rossetti without undue trouble through the first three lines of her poem, *The First Spring Day*; but when she says, "And crocus fires are kindled one by one," the child without a poetic imagination will falter. To the prosaic mind things should be spoken of as what they are, and crocuses are not fires. The teacher will have to lead the slower child to see that the golden crocus flower springing up from the cold earth is *like* a tiny flame.

But the child's difficulty will increase when he comes to the second stanza. Here only the brighter

pupils, those quick to catch a fanciful idea, will see what is meant:

> I wonder if the springtide of this year
> Will bring another spring both lost and dear.

Before one can understand fully what the poet means, a whole train of thought will have to flash through one's mind. Life has its spring time and its winter season, just as has the year. Some sorrow has come into the life of the poet which has left her heart as sad and bleak as winter. She is wondering if happiness will return to her life *just as* spring returns to the earth. Children are naturally fanciful, and they like to see into metaphors of this sort, but they need to be helped—especially those with more matter-of-fact minds.

In the lines just quoted there is, of course, for the child a further difficulty—the difficulty which arises from his limited experience of life. Every child has his vexations and disappointments, but no child, unless his existence has been very unhappy, has had any extended winter of discontent. Few boys and girls have been unhappy for such a long period that they have come to wonder whether the heart and spirit will ever again find out their spring.

Added to the limitations of the child's emotional experiences are the limitations of his knowledge. In editing the Readers an effort has been made to avoid selections which involve for their understanding a greater general knowledge than the child is likely to possess; but it is impossible—and it would be unwise—to keep always within the narrow bounds of his scanty store of information. And frequently the difficulty arises merely from the fact that the child has failed to bring to bear on the interpretation of the given passage such knowledge as is already his. The

teacher should always bear in mind that he is not dealing with minds rich with information. Again and again a child fails to understand a passage because of the limitations of his knowledge or experience.

In the discussion two aspects of the selection must be kept in mind—its nature as a whole, and the character of its separate parts. A neglect of either will mean the failure of the lesson. Detailed passages must be examined; obscurities must be cleared up; but the general thought must not be forgotten.

A bit of literature is like a building. It may be regarded as a collection of separate bricks; but no true conception of its character and purpose can be obtained without looking at it as a single unit. The mind of a skilled reader, such a reader as we observed enjoying *The Solitary Reaper*, works back and forth with great rapidity from the separate words to the general conception, visualizing each detail and placing it in the complete picture, grasping each minor idea and relating it to the general thought. So rapid is the process that it seems to be a simple and continuous reconstruction of the author's thought and feeling. But with the child the process is slower. Sometimes, indeed, he loses himself altogether.

In dealing with the more difficult selections it is wise to separate the two stages, looking first at the general idea and then at the detail. There follows an illustration of how the general idea may be dealt with.

HONOURABLE TOIL

(Fourth Reader, page 386)

How many men did Carlyle honour?

Read the sentence in which he tells us this.

Who is the first one? What is a craftsman? Name some classes of craftsmen.

State the second type of man whom Carlyle honoured? Name some classes of men who labour for the "spiritually indispensable." What is common to both classes of men?

Now, Carlyle seems to contradict himself. He says at the first that there are two men he honours, and in the last paragraph he adds a third. What is this third type? It is not a real contradiction, because this third type of man just unites the virtues of the other two. He toils with his hands and with his spirit.

As a result of the discussion a synopsis such as the following might be drawn up on the black-board:

Carlyle honoured two men—

1. The man who toils with his hands.
2. The man who toils with his spirit.

But most of all he honoured him who toils with both hands and spirit.

VITAÏ LAMPADA

(Fourth Reader, page 395)

Another selection which might be dealt with similarly is *Vitaï Lampada*. Before studying this poem in detail, the teacher should bring the pupils to see the author's purpose, by proceeding somewhat as follows:

As the poem was being read what pictures did you see?

The pupils will doubtless say that they saw three pictures—one of a game, one of a battle, one of a school.

The teacher should next try to make the pupils see the connection between these pictures, for in this connection is contained the whole idea of the poem.

What is the connection between the first picture and the second? (The same boy is seen in both.)

In the first scene what is the boy doing? (He is going in to win a very close match.)

What spurs him to his best effort? (The voice of his captain telling him to play the game.)

In the second scene what is the boy doing? (He is leading the regiment in a hard-fought battle.)

How does he rally the ranks? (He calls upon the men to play up and play the game.)

And now comes the last stanza. It is the crux of the whole matter.

Why did the poet show us this last picture?

It will take considerable thought on the part of the class to answer this question, but some bright pupil will finally see that the words "Play up, play up, and play the game!" are the motto of the school. Each generation of schoolboys hands on this brave message to the next. It expresses, in fact, the spirit of the school.

Helpful as this preliminary search for the general thought is in many cases, it is not always necessary. Frequently the difficulties of detail can be cleared up while the examination of the whole is in progress. This was the plan followed in the lesson outlined in Chapter VI, and the student is referred to that Chapter for an illustration of how it may be done.

The method of teaching to be employed in the study of a selection is the common one of questioning assisted by occasional comment. Reading requires mental exertion, and the teacher's questions should spur the child on to his best effort. His attempts at interpretation may at first be vague and imperfect, but the teacher

should not too hastily reject a child's answer as worthless. What has made him give that answer? Has he been really thinking or is he merely guessing? The teacher should find out which is the case by a further question.

Frequently an answer in literature is neither right nor entirely wrong. The child has done his best to get the author's thought, but has not succeeded in grasping it completely. If the teacher bluntly rejects his honest attempt, he will discourage him from venturing any further in this task of interpretation. If, on the other hand, the teacher receives his suggestion sympathetically and presses him to justify it, he may succeed in showing the pupil where he is wrong and in getting him to clarify his idea and express it adequately. A seemingly poor answer followed up by such a question as, What makes you think that? or, From what words do you get that notion? will frequently have the desired effect.

Sometimes, too, a passage in literature is capable of various interpretations. This is not always the result of obscurity of style (though sometimes a passage is so ambiguous that there is room for real doubt as to its meaning), but arises from the fact that the language of imagination suggests more than it actually says. Very often, in fact, the power of a noble passage is to be found, not so much in what it definitely states, as in the thoughts and feelings, the memories and associations which it calls to mind. No better example of such a passage can be found than three lines from *The Solitary Reaper*:

> Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
> For old, unhappy, far-off things,
> And battles long ago.

The meaning here is perfectly clear. Wordsworth, who understood no Gaelic, did not know the theme of the girl's song. Was she singing an old ballad dealing with ancient happenings, or was it a modern song? To explain the precise meaning of these lines is not at all difficult, but there is a suggestive power in them that is beyond analysis. In the mind of each person who reads them there will be started some different train of thought. In our examination of the book lover's manner of reading this poem we hesitated at this point, feeling that we were on the border of a region that was intimate and personal.

Questioning in a class room will not bring to light the innermost thoughts even of a child. There are thoughts so delicate and fleeting that they cannot be captured in words. But by questions that allow a diversity of interpretation the child will at least be encouraged to express his individual point of view. What "old, unhappy, far-off things" might the girl have been singing about? (She might be singing some sad old ballad like *Sir Patrick Spens.*)

What familiar matters of to-day might have been the theme of her song? (She might be singing some plaintive modern love song.)

At this point the teacher of literature will find himself confronted with two objections. The person of scientific bent will be distressed at hearing the indefinite "might-have-been" questions, and will argue that they should be made more definite. He should be reminded, however, that we are dealing with things not in the world of fact but in the world of fancy, where "might-be" and "might-have-been" are quite in the right spirit.

The second objection will come from the lover of poetry. He will be appalled at the bluntness of our

questions and at the crudeness and inadequacy of the child's answers. He will protest that such matters should be left entirely to the fancy; but he forgets that the teacher is dealing, not with mature lovers of poetry, but with faltering unformed minds that have to be helped to see the beauties that come to the trained mind in a flash. He forgets that he himself at one stage in his development was doubtless urged and assisted by some teacher's questioning, and probably himself gave answers just as crude and inadequate.

In literature, as in no other subject, the teacher must look kindly on the child's feeble efforts. When an inadequate but not unreasonable answer is given, he should say: "You may be right; perhaps that was what the author intended to say; but my notion is different." Ridicule or unsympathetic repression may blight a child's budding appreciation so that it can never be revived. If a child finds his answers always rejected, he will say to himself: "Oh, I cannot understand that sort of thing at all. It is far above me." But if the teacher receives his childish attempts at interpretation with sympathy and respect, he will quickly lose his timidity and will feel that his ideas are worth something, and that books are not only for older people, but have a meaning even for him. His interest will be kindled, and with it his ability to understand, until he finds himself capable of venturing alone into the broad fields of literature.

Every effort should be made by questioning to exhaust the child's powers of interpretation; but, when he has done his best, the teacher should add his contribution to the discussion. The spirit of a literature lesson should be rather that of a friendly exchange of

ideas between pupils and teacher than that of an examination. The teacher has had a fuller experience of life than the child, he has read more broadly and has a greater ability to interpret, and his comments should add much to the interest of the lesson.

A teacher who has camped in the wilds of Canada will be able to add greatly to the child's appreciation of such selections as *The Unnamed Lake* or *Wild Life in Algonquin Park*. One who has watched a game of cricket frequently enough to understand how it is played will be able to make up for the child's lack of knowledge of this game when *Vitaï Lampada* is read. One who has read the whole of *Kidnapped* or *The Mill on the Floss* can add to the interest of a lesson by enlightening comments on the extracts from these novels contained in the Readers. One with a full knowledge of nature and her ways will find innumerable occasions in the study of literature for making use of such knowledge.

There is the danger, of course, of turning the literature lesson into one on nature study, geography, or history, by wandering too far away from the selection under study, or by treating it in a way not at all in keeping with its spirit. A teacher who is very familiar with the red-winged blackbird, who knows its colour, its size, its habits, and all those other facts which are chronicled in ornithology, may completely destroy any real appreciation of the imaginative quality of Ethelwyn Wetherald's poem, *The Red-Winged Blackbird*, by dragging in a host of irrelevant details. But here again we are back to the teacher's own judgment. If he has got the best out of the selection himself, he will not spoil his lesson by introducing unnecessary facts, but will make his comments enlightening and inspiring.

Appreciation

Although interpretation and appreciation are dealt with separately, it must not be supposed that they are entirely separated in practice. In a certain sense, it is true, interpretation must precede appreciation. A child cannot find much pleasure in the reading of a selection until he has grasped its meaning. But in actual teaching the two processes are so closely united as to be frequently indistinguishable. If the interpretative step of a lesson is properly conducted, it should be accompanied by a sense of enjoyment on the part of the class; and with some selections nothing more is necessary to ensure appreciation than to see that the pupils comprehend.

The teacher should further remember that appreciation is an intangible thing which cannot be taught as one would teach geography or history. The lover of poetry who observes in our lesson plans that we put the curt heading—"Appreciation" may experience a chill of horror at our apparent matter-of-factness. But he may be reassured. We do not for a moment intend to suggest that "appreciation" is to be insisted upon as one would drive home a nail. We put this heading in our plans simply to indicate that this phase of the study of literature will not be forgotten in our teaching of the lesson.

The child's emotional reaction to a selection, whether it be pleasurable or the reverse, is an uncertain quantity dependent to a large extent on his personal tastes. He cannot be forced to enjoy any more than the proverbial horse can be forced to drink. All that the teacher can do is to stress certain aspects of literature which should be pleasurable to the child, and to avoid such methods of study as seem likely to deaden his interest.

In discussing a selection the teacher's chief difficulty is to avoid too great insistence on "meanings." When an obscure word or phrase is encountered, the obvious question to ask is: "What is the meaning of that word or phrase?" The question is clear and definite, and for the purpose no better one can be suggested; but if, as often happens, this question is asked over and over again, sometimes to the exclusion of any other sort of question, the result is an extremely dead and uninspiring lesson.

The following suggestions—which must be regarded not as a complete treatment of the matter, but merely as hints—are given to help the teacher to get away from this tiresome insistence on "meanings" to something more entertaining and more vital.

Stress the Content

Stress the content rather than the phraseology. Once more it must be insisted that it is necessary for the teacher himself to realize what is worth bringing out of the given selection, what phase of it is really the most interesting, the most valuable, and the best. Let him ask himself: What has interested me in this piece? What should interest the child? The answers he gives to these questions should determine the line of discussion. Will the teacher or the child be interested in the mere meanings of the words? Decidedly not. The interest of both will be in the characters, the scenes, and the situations depicted, in the feelings and thoughts expressed—that is in the content.

A bit of literature might be compared to a window pane. Through the glass may be seen sunshine, green trees, and flowers, children playing, people passing by

—in fact, all sorts of beautiful and interesting things. But a child who is eagerly trying to look out of the window may not be able to see all that is outside because of smudges which obscure the view. These smudges are like the difficulties of phraseology. In themselves they are not interesting, but they must be duly considered in order that they may be cleared away. Questions that ask merely about the meanings of the words and phrases keep the child looking at the smudges; questions that ask about more vital aspects of the piece direct his eyes past the smudges to the glimpses of real life beyond. The teacher can show his skill in questioning by clearing these smudges away, while all the time he is directing the child's attention to the fascinating things presented to the eye of the imagination.

The best way to show how this may be done is by illustration:

Poor Questioning:

What is meant by "lonely as a cloud"? What is the meaning of "vales"? Of "host"? Explain "Continuous as the stars that shine." What is the meaning of "milky way"? "margin of the bay"? "sprightly dance"? Explain "sparkling waves," "jocund company," "In vacant or in pensive mood." What is the meaning of "bliss of solitude"?

Good Questioning:

Select any words which tell us of happiness. (Dancing, twinkle, sprightly, glee, gay, jocund, bliss, pleasure.)

Who is so happy? (Poet, flowers)

Why are they happy?

What mood was the poet in when he started on his walk?

What changed his mood?

Describe the picture he saw. (Dwell on the various details.)

What wealth had the show brought to him? (The joys of a lovely memory, a vision stored away to be brought before the mind's eye at will.)

The first method makes the child think of nothing but meanings of words. The second method makes him think of happiness, the flowers, the lake, the breeze, the wealth of memory—things that are real and full of beauty and significance.

Try to make the pupils appreciate poetic imagery. Much of the power and beauty of poetry is dependent on its imagery. The philosopher thinks in abstract terms, the poet in the concrete.

Every true poem is a continuous stream of pictures, lovely in themselves, but more lovely for what they suggest. Sometimes the image is a comparison of something that is strange or distant with something that is familiar. In picturing the fierce attack of the Assyrians on the children of Israel, Byron says that they came down "like the wolf on the fold," their spears in number were "like stars on the sea," and their banners were "Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green." Comparison is one of the poet's chief tools. Almost every line of poetry contains a metaphorical expression of some sort.

But comparison of one thing with another is not the only form of imagery. Sometimes the image is a symbol representing in concrete form a thought or a feeling. Love and friendship are symbolized by flowers, anger by a storm or a raging lion. "The moment our discourse

rises above the ground line of familiar fact," said Emerson, "and is inflamed with passion or exalted by thought, it clothes itself in images."

One of the most magnificent bits of imagery in the English language is William Blake's poem, *The Tiger*. The underlying thought of the poem is the age-old perplexity over the origin of evil. How can God, who is all-great and all-wise, permit misery and wickedness in the world which He created?

This was the problem which troubled Job in the days of his affliction; this was the problem which perplexed Carlyle before there surged up in his heart a great confidence in the ultimate goodness of the universe. Long treatises have been written on the question; great thinkers have devoted their lives to answering it. But William Blake, being a poet, has compressed the whole matter into a powerful and convincing image.

In the plain language of prose the thought of his poem might be expressed as follows:

"I am perplexed by the presence of evil in the world; but I feel confident that there must be some divine reason for its existence."

There is no power in that sentence; it does not move us to thought, nor does it convince us by its expression of faith; if we came upon it in a book we should glance at it and pass on; it is a weak and uninspired attempt to put into words a great idea.

Contrast the prose manner of expressing the thought with the poetic. Just as the lamb is taken as symbolic of all that is gentle and good, so Blake uses the tiger to symbolize all that is evil.

THE TIGER

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And, when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? What the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tiger, tiger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

The great difficulty confronting the child in the comprehension of poetic imagery is the limited scope of his experience. A boy or girl who has known no other environment than the confining walls and hard pavements of a city will find it difficult to appreciate imagery borrowed from nature; and the Canadian child, because of his lack of familiarity with the birds and flowers of

England, may falter in his enjoyment of certain English poetry. Fancy must serve where familiarity is wanting. When Wordsworth in *The Solitary Reaper* compares the maiden's song to the notes of a nightingale and the call of a cuckoo bird, the child who has heard neither will have to resort wholly to his imagination. And unless he is highly sensitive to the suggestive power of verse, he will need assistance. Although his imagination may be quick and vivid it will require materials to work on. What is there in his experience that will serve as a starting-point? What bird has he heard whose song even faintly resembles the song of the nightingale? What bird does he know as the harbinger of spring?

Arlo Bates, in his books on the teaching of literature, gives an illustrative lesson which shows clearly how the teacher must proceed. As the subject of the lesson he chooses William Blake's poem, *The Tiger*, quoted above. Knowing that the little boy to whom he is teaching the lesson has never seen a tiger "burning bright in the forests of the night," and knowing that the picture is so far removed from his experience that without assistance he will be unable to grasp the imaginative force of the image, he makes it his business to discover something familiar to the child that will help him to reach out to the unfamiliar.

The boy has not seen a tiger "In the forests of the night," but he has seen the uncanny phosphorescent gleam in the eyes of a cat, and like every other child has felt its weird fascination. Helped by the memory of the tiger raging in his cage and of the cat's eyes gleaming in the dark, the child's imagination leaps to the image of the poem—a tiger, a real tiger, loose and wild, and with eyes "burning bright in the forests of

the night"—an image full of fascination and terror. "Oh," the boy says wonderingly, "Is *that* what it means?"

The teacher of literature should study this lesson thoroughly, noting the skilful use Arlo Bates makes of the limited experience of the child. And in preparing his own lessons he should ask himself such questions as these: How can I bring this remote image within the scope of the child's imagination? What memories can I find in the child's mind that will help him to comprehend what the author means? What is the proper point of departure for this voyage of comprehension? And he should be very patient with the child's faltering efforts to reach out towards what is new and unfamiliar.

Musical Qualities

Bring out the musical qualities of poetry. The rhythm and the rhyme of poetry should make a direct appeal to the child's sensuous ear. Grown-up people who have developed a love for fine effects in versification may derive pleasure from lines heard only in imagination. But children have not sufficiently practised the art of silent reading and are not sufficiently quick at catching the mute voices that sing to the inward ear. Hence with them the musical qualities of verse can be brought out only by oral reading.

In this oral reading it is well to remember that poetry is not prose. Every true poem has a certain rhythmic movement, a certain pulsation of accent; and oral reading which omits this metrical quality misses something of the true effect of poetry.

Why do teachers so frequently try to get their pupils to read poetry as if it were prose? The child, it is true,

sometimes goes too far in following the swing of the metre. His rhythmic sense is rather coarse and inclined to be of the big drum variety. But, instead of attempting to kill it altogether, the teacher should try to develop and refine it.

There is a feeling among teachers that an enjoyment of versification is above the heads of children. This is quite wrong. Accent and rhyme are the fundamental things in English poetry, and the child is quite capable of appreciating both. To catch the rhythm of simple verse he need know nothing whatever about laws of prosody. From the time when he beats his hands together as he repeats "Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man," he is appreciating metre, and in his phonics he is constantly dealing with words that "sound alike."

Some attempt should be made to develop this early sense of rhyme and rhythm. When a poem with marked rhyme is being read, the teacher might have the pupils pick out the words that "sound alike," and then one pupil should be asked to read aloud while the others listen for those words. Such a poem as the "Marching Song" in *The Child's Garden of Verses* might be used to exemplify rhythm. The pupils might be required to mark time with their hands as the verses are being read, or might even march around the room in time with the metre. And, when striking bits of versification are met with in the Readers, the child's attention should be drawn to them.

In the last line of the *Lullaby* in the Second Reader, (page 168), for instance, there is a beautiful example of simple metrical art:

> Hush! the waves are rolling in,
> White with foam, white with foam;

Father toils amid the din;
But baby sleeps at home.

Notice that as a rule in the first three lines the accent comes on the first syllable of a foot, while in the last line it comes on the second. Because of this fact the movement of the first three lines suggests exertion, storm, conflict; while the last line with its easy swing suggests nothing so much as the rocking of a cradle.

This effect the pupils can very easily be brought to observe. Let the teacher read the first three lines aloud, stressing slightly the rhythmic movement.

What do you see? What do you hear?

Let him read the whole stanza aloud.

When the last line is read what do you see?

Move your hands as the line seems to go. What is that movement like?

The pupils, again, even in the First Reader, can feel the movement of the swing in Stevenson's little poem by that name from *The Child's Garden of Verses.* The teacher might read this poem stanza by stanza, while the pupils show with their hands how the child goes up and down. The mounting of the swing is quite clearly marked in the progress of the verse, climbing up and up ever more slowly until it reaches the breathless pause at the top, and then falling quickly downwards.

Up in the air and over the wall
Till I can see so wide,
River and trees and cattle and all
Over the countryside.

In the stanza quoted, the swing reaches the top on the word "all," pauses, and drops again on the words "Over the countryside."

A very interesting display of artistic versification is to be observed in Leigh Hunt's poem, *The Glove and the Lions* in the Fourth Reader. Throughout the poem, for example, only the one word "hearty" is used to describe King Francis' character and appearance; yet, when one hears the piece read aloud, a fairly clear impression of the king remains on one's mind. Experiments have been made with several classes, and in each case the pupils agreed that the king was large, kingly, bearded, slow and dignified in movement, richly dressed. Where did they get their notions? Simply from the suggestive power of the movement and sound of the lines that tell of his words and actions.

> Said Francis, then, "Good gentlemen, we're better here than there!"

And:

> "In truth!" cried Francis, "rightly done!" and he rose from where he sat:
> "No love," quoth he, "but vanity, sets love a task like that!"

The person who has made a study of prosody will perceive that the effect here is gained by the use of full-sounding words; but the child need realize only that it is the slow full movement of the line that gives him his impression of the king's regal bearing.

The examples were introduced only as illustrations. A teacher with an ear for verse will find the Readers full of other examples just as good.

CHAPTER X

RECAPITULATION

In the teaching of literature, one of the commonest faults is the failure to provide a proper conclusion for the lesson. The details of the selection are studied through to the end, and there the discussion is dropped. In the child's mind there remains, not an impression of a connected story or poem, but the memory of this difficulty and that explanation, this obscure passage and that paraphrase, this question and that answer. Instead of the complete artistic effect that the author desired, the child recalls merely the scattered fragments of a class discussion. He is, in fact, not unlike that Frenchman who failed to see the forest for the trees.

To avoid this fault the teacher should from time to time gather up the threads of the thought. When a suitable place is reached in the selection, (it may be the end of a division, or merely the end of a long paragraph or stanza,) the teacher should have the pupils pause and look back over what they have been studying.

Some such questions as the following might be asked:

What phase of the subject has the author dealt with in the part you have just read?

Up to this point what have we learned of the characters or incidents in this story?

What was the author's purpose in writing the paragraph you have just read?

What is the main thought of this paragraph?

How much of the scene has the author so far pictured for us?

The questions would have to be varied, of course, according to the nature of the material. Their purpose is to make the child ascend, as it were, to a hilltop, and look back over the road he has so far travelled. Especially when it is necessary to drop the study of a selection before the end is reached, some such rapid review will serve to give a temporary completeness to the lesson; and, if the class is led to take a similar glance backward at the beginning of the next lesson, the threads of the thought will not be lost in the interval.

But the most important place for such recapitulation is at the end of the study of a selection. When the pupils have interpreted as satisfactorily as possible all the difficult passages, they should be required to look once more at the whole; that is, when they have rubbed all the smears and smudges from the window pane, they should be required to spend a few moments gazing at the complete vista beyond.

Why does the teacher so frequently fail in this part of the lesson? Largely because his mind is often clouded as to precisely what form such a step should take. He has heard something of "main thoughts," "general ideas," "chief topics," and of the advisability of having these stated by the pupils at the conclusion of a lesson; but he himself finds difficulty in understanding exactly what is meant.

What is the main thought of *The Battle of the Pipes* or *The Archery Contest?* The purpose of these selections is to tell a story, not to enunciate any particular "main thought." How could the "main thought" of a piece of impressionism such as *The Unnamed Lake* be stated? Or of a fervent expression of sentiment such as *Afton Water?*

In the study of such selections as these—and all selections that are not didactic, expository, or argumentative, are of this sort—it is a waste of time to seek for any formula of words that might be taken to express the main thought. For each piece studied the teacher must make the necessary mental effort to get a suitable recapitulation step. A stereotyped series of questions is of no greater value here than anywhere else in the teaching of literature. In the study of each selection the teacher must ask himself: What is the best way of leading the pupils to look away from the details to the complete whole?

The following examples of method in recapitulation are given, not as definite formulas, but as illustrations:

THE RIDE FOR LIFE
(Third Reader, page 34)

This selection is an exciting story which leads up to a conclusion. It ends with the words: "but from that hour Ranald had a friend ready to offer life for him, though he did not know it then nor till years afterwards."

This statement might well be made the motive for the recapitulation.

Let us see if we understand why Mrs. Murray thought so much of Ranald.

As the story opened what were the two doing? What did they hear?

What did this cry indicate to Ranald?

What did they hear as they galloped through the bush?

What would have happened had the wolves caught them?

How did Ranald show his unselfishness and bravery?

THE ROMANCE OF MARQUIS WHEAT

(Fourth Reader, page 66)

This selection is a story, but it is a true story. It should be dealt with somewhat differently from the ordinary tale that is read only for amusement. It contains information that the child might do well to remember. In dealing with selections of this sort, the recapitulation should be made as definite and orderly as in a history lesson.

In the development of Marquis wheat, what was the first variety to be evolved?

Where did Fife live? Where did the seed come from?

Who was the next man to take up the work? What did he try to do? How did his efforts succeed?

Who continued his work? What variety proved the best to cross with Red Fife?

What was the chief good quality of the new variety?

A summary such as the following might be written on the black-board.

THE ROMANCE OF MARQUIS WHEAT

1. Red Fife:
   - (*a*) Grown from a seed grain from Austria.
   - (*b*) Developed by a farmer near Peterborough.
   - (*c*) Proved a hardy wheat good for flour.
2. Marquis:
   - (*a*) An earlier ripening wheat required in the West.
   - (*b*) Experiments begun by Dr. Saunders and continued by his son.
   - (*c*) A cross of Red Fife and Hard Red Calcutta resulted in Marquis wheat.

IN NOVEMBER
(Fourth Reader, page 102)

This poem is pure description—it is merely an attempt to suggest a picture. Lampman, if he had been skilful with paints instead of with words, might have represented this scene in water colours. To gather up the effect the teacher might suggest to the class the painting of a picture.

Let us pretend that we are going to paint this scene. What shall we put in our picture? (Leafless forests)

What else should go into the picture? (The woodmen's carts)

Where shall we place them? (On the road)

Where should the road lead from?

What else should go into the picture? (The ploughman working in the field)

Where should the field go? The ploughman?

What colour shall we make the sky? The field? The road?

If the teacher is handy with his chalk, he may, as the questions proceed, lay out the picture with hastily drawn lines on the black-board.

THE BATTLE OF THE PIPES
(Fourth Reader, page 18)

This story could easily be dramatized, and no better recapitulation step could be suggested. Yet sometimes full dramatization is impracticable. In such cases the teacher may get the pupils simply to pretend that they are going to act the story.

What characters take part? What is each one like? Where is the scene laid? (In Duncan Dhu's cottage)

Describe the interior of this cottage.

Where did Robin meet Alan?

What was their attitude towards each other?

Who stopped them from fighting?

What was Duncan's suggestion? (That they should try to settle who was the better piper.)

What would the several people be doing as the contest went on? How did it end?

AUTUMN WOODS
(Fourth Reader, page 103)

This poem is descriptive; but the description is suffused with a very strong emotional colouring. It is, in fact, a true lyric, and nothing in it is more noteworthy than the musical beauty of the lines. Along with the picture of the autumn woods, the pupil should retain in his memory something of the poem's music. For this purpose the teacher may have several pupils read aloud the lines which especially appeal to them—read them while the class just listens. If no pupil picks out such an exquisite passage as the first stanza, the teacher himself should do so:

> Ere, in the northern gale,
> The summer tresses of the trees are gone,
> The woods of Autumn, all around our vale,
> Have put their glory on.

To bring out the musical qualities of this stanza the teacher should dwell lightly on the long wailing vowels in such words as "Ere," "gale," "gone," "all," and "vale," and should give full value to the rhyme and the rhythm. After reading it he might get the pupils to tell him what the sound is like. (Like the wind in autumn)

He might then read the stanza once more, while the pupils listen intently and try to hear the winds of autumn.

It may be noted that in only one of the above illustrations is a black-board summary recommended—and that in the case of an informative selection. This apparent neglect of the black-board summary is no accident. In the study of most selections, especially poems, a written summary places the emphasis on the wrong elements. The logical framework of such a poem as, for instance, *Daffodils*, is of small importance. Why should any child be asked to carry in his memory the plan of such a poem? What good will such a plan be to him? Much better if he remember nothing but a few of the finest lines—the last two, for instance:

> And then my heart with pleasure fills,
> And dances with the daffodils.

This Chapter concludes our examination of the methods and devices to be employed in the intensive study of literature. The various steps of the formal lesson have been dealt with in their proper order; but the treatment of them has of necessity been spread through several Chapters. It may help the student to see the lesson as a whole if at this point a list of the lesson headings is given.

I. The Aim
II. The Preparation
III. The Statement of the Problem
IV. The Presentation:
    1. The Reading of the Selection
    2. The Interpretation of the Selection
        (*a*) The General Idea
        (*b*) The Difficult Passages
    3. The Appreciation of the Selection
V. The Recapitulation.

CHAPTER XI

TYPICAL LESSON OUTLINES

KING SOLOMON AND THE BEES
(First Reader, page 34)

With a First Form class a prose selection such as this should be little more than an exercise in silent reading. The pupils should be forced to read carefully and to work out the details for themselves. The teacher should remember that they have not mastered the difficulties of word-recognition.

Such simple questions as the following should direct the pupils' study of the selection:

Whom is this story about? When did he live? What sort of man was he?

Read a sentence which tells you how very wise he was.

Who drove up to his castle? What did she bring to the king?

And so on throughout the story.

The lesson should be concluded by a brief resumé of the facts of the story, and should be followed by oral reading.

THE DUEL
(Second Reader, page 97)

The poem should be read aloud. Some of the words and phrases would have to be dealt with in passing; but the teacher's main concern should be to see that the children have grasped the story and have appreciated the delightfully whimsical humour.

The discussion might be opened by surmises as to what really happened to the dog and the cat.

What does the poet think happened?

How did he learn the truth of the matter?

How did the Chinese plate and the old Dutch clock come to know all about it?

Now let us read more carefully the whole story. Where were the dog and the cat sitting?

What time was it? Where would every one else be at that time?

The teacher might then repeat in a hushed voice:

> 'Twas half-past twelve, and (what do you think!)
> Nor one nor t'other had slept a wink!

Who was watching them?

What did the old Dutch clock and the Chinese plate think was going to happen? What do you suppose made them think that?

(The child should here be allowed to use his fancy.)

How did the quarrel start? The question as to why the Chinese plate looked so blue is worth discussing; and a pupil might be asked to show how the old Dutch clock put his hands up before his face at the sight, and to explain why it did this.

The questions should continue in this strain, the whole matter being treated with pretended seriousness, until the end is reached.

The teacher's attitude towards the poem will be of tremendous importance. If he treats it in a matter-of-fact spirit, the effect will be spoiled. Furthermore, if he tried to draw any moral lesson from it, as some teachers do, about the evils of fighting, the effect will be spoiled. The selection is just a delightful

bit of fun. The children will appreciate it, if they are given any encouragement, perhaps more than any other poem in the Reader. At the conclusion of the discussion, by way of review, one pupil might be asked to pretend that he was the old Dutch clock and tell exactly what happened. And then the whole poem should be read once more.

THE TIGER, THE BRAHMAN, AND THE JACKAL
(Second Reader, page 128)

The introduction to the study of this selection might take the form of a study of the picture at the head of the page.

What sort of man is a Brahman? (A holy man in India is called a Brahman.)

Which is the tiger? Which the jackal?

Which is the fiercer, the jackal or the tiger? Which is the more cunning?

In what other story in the Reader did the jackal show his cleverness?

In teaching literature to a Second Form class the teacher must remember that the pupils are still having difficulties with the mechanics of reading. The process of study must be painstaking and thorough. The pupils would enjoy this story if the teacher were to read it to them; but this would not give them the practice in reading which they so much need. Although the teacher should sometimes, even at this stage, present a selection by reading it himself, he should require the pupils to read many silently, which is the method of presentation recommended for this story.

When the teacher has assured himself that the pupils have finished reading, he should question on the general idea.

Who is the kindest character in the story? How did he show his kindness?

Who is the most unpleasant character? Why did you not like him?

Who is the cleverest character? How did he show his cleverness?

And then the story should be studied in detail. The teacher should carefully question on each paragraph to see that the pupils have understood it. These questions should be directed, not so much to discovering the meanings of the words, (although when an unfamiliar word occurs no harm will result from asking for its meaning,) as to finding out if the pupils have grasped the facts of the story.

When the story opens where was the tiger?

How did he try to get out of the cage?

What does this show you regarding the tiger's disposition?

The main points of the story should finally be recalled by a rapid recapitulation, and then the whole story should be read aloud.

MAGGIE TULLIVER

(Third Reader, page 125)

This lesson might well be made a lesson in character study. The personalities, especially of the older people, stand out very clearly and will readily be appreciated by the pupils. The aunts and uncles are seen, as it were,

through the eyes of Maggie and Tom; and the traits of character they reveal are such as will be understood by children.

The whole selection should first be read through silently by the pupils or aloud by the teacher. The teacher should then make sure that the pupils have grasped the circumstances and action of the story.

The scene, for instance, should be made quite clear. The aunts and uncles of the family have all come to visit, and Maggie and Tom are supposed to be on their best behaviour.

Maggie's action will then be discussed, and this will lead naturally to a talk about the characters. Why did Maggie do what she did? The answer to that question will involve a real understanding of the characters in the story. Each of the three aunts should be discussed separately, and the children should be encouraged to give their opinions of them. These opinions should, of course, be supported by definite passages in the story. What did Aunt Glegg say or do that would hurt Maggie's feelings? And Aunt Pullet? And Aunt Dean? In what the aunts said, what would make Maggie decide to cut her hair?

And a discussion as to why she took Tom with her will bring out her feeling towards her brother and will show why she was hurt by his lack of sympathy later.

The effect of Maggie's action on the various characters should next be discussed. Which one did she go to for sympathy? Why?

The lesson might be concluded by having the pupils pick out the character they dislike most, and having them tell why, and the character they like best, also with the reason.

AFTON WATER

(Fourth Reader, page 109)

This poem is a simple love song. In teaching it the temptation is to do too much rather than too little. There is no need whatever of looking up a biography of Burns to discover who Mary was. He is in love with her, that is enough. Neither is there any need for too searching an examination of the poem. Questions should be asked to bring out the circumstances of the two lovers. The youth is a shepherd, who wanders with his sheep by Afton Water; his Mary lives near by in a little cottage; they often see each other during the day, and in the evening they meet on the banks of the stream. The interpretation of the phraseology need not go beyond the following limits:

"braes"—hills

"yon thorny den"—a clump of thorny bushes

"rills"—little streams

"cot"—cottage

"as mild ev'ning weeps over the lea"—as the dew falls in the quiet of the evening.

"How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,
As gathering sweet flow'rets she stems thy clear wave—"

How playfully the water of the brook washes her white feet as she wades up the stream picking flowers.

"the theme of my lays"—the subject of my song.

(It should be noticed, however, that the real subject of the poet's song is not the river, but Mary.)

So long as the pupils know that the stock-dove and the lapwing are birds that is enough—and what child will not get that from the context?

The best possible conclusion for the lesson would be to have the pupils sing this song, or to let them hear it sung. Wanting that, it should be read.

SCOTS WHA HAE
(Fourth Reader, page 179)

This poem is supposed to be the address of King Robert Bruce to his troops just before the Battle of Bannockburn. As introduction a question or two should be asked on the historic background, and the teacher should picture the scene. The Scottish troops are drawn up in order of battle; Edward's army is approaching; the Scottish king on his sturdy war-horse is out in front of his troops encouraging them to fight their best. Then the poem should be read as effectively as possible by the teacher.

In the study of the selection the chief difficulty will be the Scottish dialect. It is a good idea to draw up on the black-board, with the help of the pupils, a brief glossary such as the following:

wha—who
hae—have
wi'—with
wham—whom
aften—often
sae—so
fa'—fall.

When once the pupils see that the strange words are just the Scot's way of pronouncing common English words, the difficulty will vanish. The poem should be examined to see what means King Bruce employs to inspire his men. From the first stanza select any passage that would make his soldiers wish to do or die. Why would reference to Wallace inspire the Scots? And so on.

In conclusion, certain pupils might be called upon to read the poem as King Bruce would deliver his speech.

DAVID COPPERFIELD'S FIRST JOURNEY ALONE
(Fourth Reader, page 110)

In preparation for the reading of this story the pupils should be told the following facts: David is going to a boarding-school many miles away from his own home; he is going by stage-coach all alone. The pupils may be allowed to read the selection silently. When they have finished, the teacher should make sure that they have got the main points of the story.

Where does the story take place?

What happens on David's arrival?

What sort of meal did he get?

How did he make it disappear?

What did the other people think had happened to the meal?

After such a general survey, the story should be read again bit by bit, and studied in detail. The phraseology should cause little difficulty. The discussion should centre about such points as the following: How new and strange everything seemed to David; what a big meal was brought in; what the waiter was like and how he acted; how cleverly the waiter got what he wanted out of poor David; how David's fears regarding the school were increased; and what the others thought of him as the stage drove away.

The pupils, above everything, should be allowed to enjoy the scene with the waiter. His motives should be thoroughly discussed and his cleverness. Most of the pupils will see through him without much trouble.

As a fitting conclusion the story might be dramatized.

CHAPTER XII

RELATING LITERATURE TO THE CHILD'S ACTIVITIES

In the study of the Science of Education we learn that our teaching should result in some activity on the child's part. New skill should be increased by practice, new ideas made clearer by being expressed.

In the teaching of literature this dictum needs certain qualifications. The wise teacher fully realizes that contact with the noble and beautiful works of art will influence the child, but sometimes that influence will show itself in ways that cannot be definitely measured. A literature lesson that contains something better than mere interpretation will penetrate into the hidden regions of the child's mind. Thoughts and feelings will be aroused in him that cannot be transformed into any definite activity nor expressed in any tangible form.

It may be that the best results of a lesson in literature will show themselves merely in a momentary look of wonder, of seriousness, of inner comprehension on a pupil's face. Though the child may be incapable of putting into definite words the half-formed thoughts that have been started in his mind, he has had a new vision of life. The child's mind is constantly growing; new forces are awakening every day; and, to a degree which we scarcely suspect, the imagery of the literature he studies in school is being woven into the warp and woof of his being.

The deepest results of the teaching of literature are probably those which do not find expression in any school exercise. Nevertheless, the teacher will try in

so far as he can to bring some response from the pupil, to get him to show in some definite way that the lesson has had its effect on him. In this and the following three Chapters suggestions will be given for relating literature to the child's activities.

Composition

Topics arising out of the study of literature may occasionally be used for oral or written compositions; but incompetent teachers by ill-judged assignments have brought this form of exercise into disfavour. The mere "writing out of the story of the lesson cannot be too strongly condemned. This last resort of the teacher who is at a loss to find work to keep his pupils busy, is of value neither for literature nor for composition. It results in a crude paraphrasing of the lesson so mechanical as to be valueless as a practice in expression, and so uninteresting as to destroy any good effect the literature lesson may have had.

If the child is to be asked to put into words the ideas caught from the literature lesson, he should be given at least a fresh viewpoint from which to deal with the subject. Instead of asking for a mere paraphrase of the story, the teacher might tell the child to describe a certain character or scene, or to recount a certain incident from a new viewpoint—possibly as if he himself were present. But above everything else the teacher should beware of letting the assignment become tiresome; and if he suspects that the writing of compositions destroys the interest in literature, he should demand some other means of expression.

ASSIGNMENTS

The following assignments will indicate how composition may be used in connection with the study of literature:

The Bugle Song (Third Reader, page 201):

Ask the pupils to describe a sunset which they remember vividly and tell some lofty thought which it brought to their minds.

The English and the Sea (Third Reader, page 25):

The pupils will write a short composition telling why the people of England should be glad that England is an island.

The Talents (Third Reader, page 57):

Write a story of some one who used a talent and gained thereby one talent more.

The Slave's Dream (Third Reader, page 149):

The pupils will describe a sailor's dream or a soldier's dream.

England, My England (Fourth Reader, page 393):

Ask the pupils to write a composition on the topic "How Can I Help England?" or "How Can I Help Canada?"

On the Grasshopper and Cricket (Fourth Reader, page 81):

Describe the music of a summer twilight.

How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix (Fourth Reader, page 342):

"The news which alone could save Aix from her fate."

The pupils imagine the circumstances which lay behind the ride from Ghent to Aix, and tell the story so as to show what danger threatened Aix and how that danger was averted.

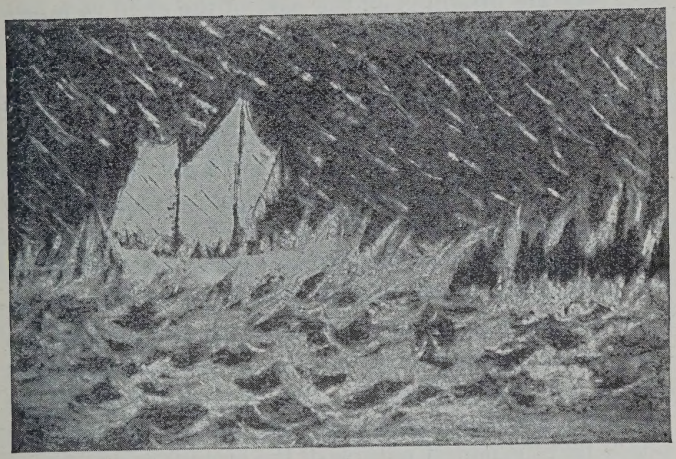
My Castles in Spain (Fourth Reader, page 243):

Ask each pupil to describe his own castle in Spain.

Manual Work and Art

In the Junior grades considerable use may be made of manual work in connection with the study of literature. The pupils, for example, may be required to model in plasticine some of the things spoken of in the stories they read. First Form pupils might make in plasticine the tortoise who runs a race with the hare, or the light-house which Lucy kept, or the axe which the honest woodman lost. Sometimes, indeed, they might be asked to model a whole scene. They might represent, for instance, the crows and the windmill. Using this, they might describe the incidents.

But whereas modelling in plasticine as a means of illustration is possible only occasionally and only in the lower Forms, the making of illustrative drawings may be used freely in all grades. With the younger pupils the drawing will be very crude, will, indeed, be nothing more than a symbolic way of representing ideas. A certain sort of figure represents a man, another sort of figure a horse, and still another a building. The drawing is, in fact, a species of hieroglyphics, and must be interpreted as such by the teacher. In the higher grades remarkably good illustrations will sometimes be produced by pupils with artistic gifts; but the illustrative drawings should not be considered strictly as works of



art; they are attempts on the part of the child to reproduce in visible form the pictures he has imagined as he read.

When the drawings are being criticised, they should be considered, not only for their artistic qualities, proportion, arrangement, and so on, but also for their accuracy. Is the picture a true representation of the scene described in the book? Are the people dressed as they should be? Are they in the right postures? Does the background conform with that described?

Sometimes there will be revealed curious misapprehensions on the part of the pupils. When a certain class was required to illustrate the conflict between the Crusader and the Saracen, it was discovered that the pupils had the oddest notions of the armour and weapons of the combatants. The Crusader's mace, for instance, was pictured as everything from a conductor's baton to a huge battle-axe. Very few of the pupils had any definite idea as to what it really was like. The children will express in drawing what they could never express in words, and the teacher will have an opportunity of correcting many misconceptions. The medium to be used should permit of rapid execution. Excellent effects can be obtained in a few minutes with charcoal and white chalk on yellow paper.

The objection sometimes raised to this form of expression is that the pupils, especially the older ones, are not inclined to take it seriously. They produce silly grotesque drawings, so it is claimed, and make the whole exercise a bit of nonsense. But this need not happen. If the pupils are trained from the earliest grades to take illustration seriously, they will thoroughly enjoy it, and will strive even in the higher Forms to produce the best pictures of which they are capable.

The illustration of a selection of literature should be treated by the teacher as seriously as any other form of art work. He should make perfectly clear to the pupils what they are to do, help them, perhaps, by a preliminary discussion, and hold a criticism of the results just as in any other art lesson.

Dramatization

Dramatization is thoroughly in the spirit of the child's own attempts to relate literature to life. All children, especially imaginative children, like to play at something they have read. A boy who has read an Indian story will build a teepee for himself in the corner of the fence, will whittle out a bow and arrow, and will prowl about the neighbourhood shooting deer and pale-faces. A girl who has read about a fairy princess will play around in some of her mother's cast-off finery and pretend that everything she wishes will come true. The instinct to represent attractive scenes and incidents from books in the form of play is very strong in childhood. In this way the child makes real to himself what has been but a vague and fleeting product of the imagination.

This instinct to dramatize can be made use of by the teacher of literature. Nothing will help to bring literature close to the child, to give it real significance for him more than dramatization. A selection that has been played has ceased to be merely a collection of words and has come to be something real, something pleasurable. When a child has taken part in acting some story from a book, he can no longer feel that books are only for grown-up people.

In spite of the generally recognized value of dramatization, however, very few teachers make sufficient use of it. When asked why they do not more often let the children dramatize their stories, most teachers answer that they have not time. If properly conducted, dramatization should not be open to this objection. There is a notion that a selection must be studied thoroughly in the literature lesson, and read until the expression is perfect in the reading lesson before it is dramatized. Teachers look on this method of expression as an extra and quite often superfluous drill. What they should realize is that dramatization is not something to follow the literature lesson and the oral reading lesson, but is a co-ordinate part of the lesson. Nothing will bring about an understanding of a selection more quickly than to have it acted, nor will anything more speedily bring free and natural expression in oral reading. Very often a teacher will struggle with the explanation or the expression of a passage that could in a few moments be made perfectly clear by letting the pupils act it. Especially in the lower grades, many of the lessons may be taught throughout simply by dramatization, and in the higher grades, if the teacher once lets the pupils "read the parts," he will realize that no further teaching of reading is necessary.

Another objection made by practical teachers is that it involves too much preparation. Gathering the properties and arranging the scene, some teachers feel, will be too burdensome and will distract the pupils from their more serious work. But here again the objection is based on a misconception. The acting of a story need involve no preliminary preparation at all. The simpler the production the better. There is no need for elaborate stage settings or for many properties. There is

no need to go beyond the school-room for the articles to be used, and the stage setting may mean nothing more than the proper placing of a chair or a table—in fact, both properties and stage setting may be purely imaginary.

All arrangements for the acting should be suggested and carried out by the pupils. The teacher, by questioning, should induce them to search out what characters take part, where the scene to be enacted takes place, and what really happens. This is of the greatest value in training the children to read with accuracy and understanding. The mere searching out from the printed page of all the details necessary for the acting of the story is in itself one of the most valuable exercises that can be given a child.

In acting *Little Miss Muffet* (the dramatization of which was dealt with in Chapter VI) no words would be spoken unless, of course, Miss Muffet exclaims "Oh!" when the spider sits down beside her. Where, however, the story calls for conversation, as in *The Cat and the Bird* (Primer Page 60), the parts should be read by the pupils. This may be done from the Reader or from the black-board.

In the lower grades where the children are not reading with any freedom, a difficulty arises here. A child finds it hard to pick out the exact words he is expected to read, and sometimes he will even go so far as to speak the explanatory words, such as, "said the cat," or "said the bird." The teacher must be patient until the pupils have caught the idea. If the story is being read from the black-board, he can help them by the use of coloured chalk. The explanatory words may

be written with white, and each of the characters may have a colour to himself—yellow for the little bird and orange for the cat.

The junior teacher will find dramatization a great boon in making his reading lessons vivid and interesting. And the device is helpful, not only in the lower grades, but also in the higher. Even the children in the Third and Fourth Forms will profit by acting such of their selections as are suitable. With older pupils, of course, a higher standard should be set. The acting should be more natural and the reading more expressive; but here, too, the performance should be as simple as possible. No material should be required except what is easily available, and the setting of the stage should disarrange the school-room as little as possible. Nor is it necessary to act the whole of the chosen story. Usually a story involves several scenes, and only one of these may be suitable for acting.

A Mad Tea Party, (Third Reader, page 142) is very easily dramatized. Let the pupils first choose the characters.

Who would read Alice's part well? The March Hare's part? The Hatter's part? The Dormouse's part? The Hatter should wear a large hat; the others will do as they are.

When the characters are chosen, the scene should next be arranged.

Where does this tea party take place? The teacher's desk may be cleared to serve as the table.

How many chairs will be needed? Two pupils should arrange the chairs about the table.

As the play opens what should each character be doing? When all is ready the actors should take their

places and proceed with the reading. For each acting, one or two pages would be enough.

When the play is finished, the class should be called upon to act as critics.

What was good in the acting? Or the reading? How could it have been improved?

The book should be referred to constantly as the authority. If Alice, for instance, reads the words, "Come, we shall have some fun now," it should be pointed out to her that it says in the book that Alice merely *thought* those words. And if the Dormouse speaks as loudly and briskly as the others, it should be pointed out to him that the book says that he seemed to be talking in his sleep. When the teacher has added his suggestions to those of the pupils, another cast should be chosen, and the scene should be acted once more.

Memorization

Great care should be taken in choosing passages for memorization. What a child learns by heart when he is in school usually stays with him for life, and if it is good, it will be of real value to him. There are a great many poems and stories which have their place in childhood, but are not worthy of being stored permanently in the treasure house of memory. Every adult can repeat verse after verse of inferior poetry that he learned in school, poetry that may have impressed him when he was young by its pompous sound or quaint imagery, but now that he is older has completely lost its appeal. Some of the so-called "memory gems" are so trivial or dull, so crude in the literary sense, that they are scarcely worth repeating, much less memorizing—in fact the amount of didactic poetry that is worth memorizing is very small.

Most of the moralizing verses for children are sheer doggerel—as for example *Mary's Lamb* of pious memory. When there is so much that is beautiful and noble in English poetry, why clutter a child's memory permanently with inferior verses?

Little need be said in this connection about the method of instruction. In the lowest grades the memorization will be mostly oral, the child learning as the teacher repeats. But as the child develops, the task of memorization may be left more with himself, until in the higher grades the teacher may simply give the assignment and make sure that the work is done.

CHAPTER XIII

ORAL READING

THERE has been in recent years a revolution in our attitude towards reading aloud. The teacher of a generation ago looked upon oral reading as the exhibition subject of the curriculum. He drilled his class in reading until each pupil could stand up and declaim with due impressiveness the startling information that "The boy stood on the burning deck," or roll out with solemn unction "Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note." The effects were very unnatural, very unchildlike, the expression was considerably overdone; but the heart of the visiting father or mother would swell with parental pride at the achievement of the budding elocutionist. No account was taken of the fact that the child had gone over and over the same selection until he was thoroughly weary of it, nor of the fact that the expression was almost wholly the teacher's and gave no indication of the child's understanding and appreciation of literature.

The result of this traditional treatment of oral reading has been to bring the subject into disfavour with some authorities. Many teachers nowadays, knowing that it is more important that the child should be able to read to himself with understanding and enjoyment than that he should be able to declaim for the benefit of others, are sacrificing oral reading in order that they may put more emphasis on extensive reading. This, however, is a mistake. Valuable as extensive reading is, it should not be allowed to displace its companion exercise. The error of the past has been, not so much

an over-emphasis of oral reading, as a mistaken attitude towards it. Oral reading has functions to perform in the teaching of English that make it an essential part of every elementary school course.

Clear Enunciation

In oral reading a child may be taught a clear and pleasant enunciation. An inspector was asked what he considered the chief defect in the reading of his inspectorate. "Careless articulation," he said. "The pupils slur and mumble their words so that one can scarcely hear what they say ten feet away." Children are careless and slovenly in their manner of speech. This will come out in their oral reading, and an opportunity is given to the teacher to correct the "gonnas" and "hafta's" and "jist's" and "git's" which make the careless person's speech flat and ugly. The English language has many different accents each with its own beauties on the lips of cultured people, each with its own defects when spoken carelessly. The Canadian accent has its own musical qualities when properly used; but in the mouths of careless uncultured people it becomes flat and toneless. Our tendency is to flatten the "a" sound in such words as "half" and "path;" to blunt the sound of "u" in such words as "new" and make it sound like "oo;" and to slur consonantal sounds that demand some effort for their correct pronunciation such as the *t* sound between two *s's* in such words as "mists," the *d* sound after an *n* in such words as "and," and the *ng* sound at the end of words ending in "ing." We do not need to say "pawth," or to pronounce "soar" as if it were a homonym for "saw," in order to speak pleasantly; neither do we need to speak with priggish affectation; but the Canadian teacher might well try to bring a little more precision

into the articulation of words, a little more softness into the modulation of the voice, without being accused of pedantry.

The Making of a Good Impression

Oral reading gives the teacher an opportunity to train the child to make a good impression in public.

Not many children will enter a profession in which public reading is necessary, but the ability to read to others

from a platform or in the home is not to be despised, and the confidence and agreeable manner developed in reading can be carried over to a certain extent into public speaking.

Unless the passage to be read is very short, the child should be brought to the front of the room to read. He should be taught to stand in an erect easy posture; to hold the book well away from the body and well up, so that he can see it without dropping his head, and can read to the class and not to the floor. Which hand should hold the book is a matter of small importance, but most teachers prefer the left hand so that the right will be free for turning the page or for any natural gesticulation. The attitude and manner should be natural and easy. The child should be taught to read loudly and distinctly enough to be heard in every part of the room.

Conditions in the ordinary ungraded school are not favourable to the development of a clear full voice. In a rural school the reading lesson has to be taken at the front of the room, and each pupil reads, not to the whole school, but to the teacher who stands only a few feet from him. The result is that the pupils develop a habit of reading almost in an undertone. The rural school teacher, if he is to overcome this tendency, must recognize its cause and must take measures to counteract the natural conditions under which he and his pupils do their work.

Two or three suggestions might not be out of place here. The teacher may go himself to the back of the room while the pupils read from the front. If this is made a regular practice, the child's natural instinct to make himself heard will develop in him the habit of speaking in a fairly full tone. As a variation the teacher

and the class may stay at one end of the room while the pupil who is to read is sent to the other. The increased loudness in reading will not in the least disturb the other pupils when once they have become used to it. Sometimes, indeed, it is well to have the whole school stop work and listen to the reading of one or two of the better pupils; and, occasionally, one of the older children may be required, after a little preparation, to read to the whole school something new and interesting.

The Expression of Proper Feeling

Oral reading will enable the child to give expression to the thoughts and feelings that a selection has aroused in him. After the study of a selection there will, of course, be vague aspirations, inarticulate feelings, and half-conceived thoughts of which the child himself scarcely realizes the significance, and which he cannot express in words. Some of these vague stirrings will remain for ever inarticulate; some may not find expression for years; but in a certain way and to a certain extent, much of what the child has felt and thought as the selection was studied will come out in the oral reading. And he should be encouraged in this self-expression.

Too often the teacher looks on the reading lesson as a sort of drill, and takes the same attitude towards an appreciative vivacious style of reading as towards a style that is merely correct. It is not enough that the child should repeat correctly the words of the passage he is asked to read. He should be encouraged to show his feelings. When a sly smile creeps over his face at some touch of humour in what he is reading, the teacher should respond with real spontaneity. When the child shows by the earnestness of his voice and manner that

he has caught something of the seriousness of what he is reading, the teacher should show by his expression and his comments later that he is touched by the same thing that has affected the pupil.

Improvement of Oral Reading

Before working out a method for the teaching of oral reading, we should first see clearly what instruction in this subject is designed to accomplish. The task which confronts a teacher in his oral reading lessons is not that of teaching pupils to read. That is the work of the primary teacher.

The senior teacher's task is to develop and improve an ability which the child in a limited way already possesses. In a given lesson, that is to say, the aim must be, not to teach the pupils to read the chosen extract, but to improve their manner of reading it, and to transform their halting and monotonous repetition of words into reading that is free, natural, and expressive. In this sense the problem that confronts the teacher in the First Form is essentially the same as the problem that confronts him in the Fourth; and in devising a method for the teaching of oral reading we need not look at the problem by grades, but may consider it as a whole.

Diagnosis

Let us suppose that the teacher finds himself in a school where the reading is below the proper standard, and that he decides, if possible, to improve that reading. How should he set about this task? His problem is similar to that of the physician. He finds himself called upon to improve the reading of his pupils, just as the

doctor is called upon to improve the health of a patient, and he should proceed in the same manner. His attention should first be given to diagnosis. What is the cause of the poor reading? When the doctor feels the pulse and takes the temperature of his patient, he knows that he may be confronted with one of several diseases; but the teacher's task of diagnosis is much simpler. He may with fair certainty narrow the list of possibilities down to four simple causes.

1. Recognition of Word: The pupil may not be able to recognize the words quickly enough to read with freedom and naturalness. He may know all the words; he may be able to say them as quickly as the teacher can point; but this is not enough. He must be able to recognize them so rapidly that his eye can travel several words ahead of his voice. What unending practice is required to give the necessary speed in word-recognition few teachers realize. Even grown-up people with many years of constant reading behind them will stumble over an unfamiliar passage; and the teacher need not be surprised if pupils even in the Third or Fourth Form are still not reading with the freedom he desires.

2. Recognition of Meaning: The child is not grasping the full significance of what he is reading. This second defect is frequently nothing but the outcome of lack of facility in the more elementary process of word-recognition; but sometimes it is really a failure of the child's reason and imagination to function with proper vividness and comprehension. What he reads has no real significance for him—it is just a series of meaningless and difficult words; and an expressionless voice and manner are the natural result.

3. Staleness of Selection: The child may fail to read expressively simply because he is bored. How can we expect a pupil to retain any interest in a piece after he has read it at home, during the literature period, at his seat, and in the oral reading period perhaps more than twenty times? In order that a child may read a passage well, he must find in it a degree of freshness. In this case, the more a teacher labours with a class the worse the reading becomes. When the freshness is gone, the reading tends to become mechanical, and the class should go on to something new.

4. Bad Habit in Reading: The child's expressionless manner of reading may be the result of a long established habit. This, indeed, especially in the higher Forms, is the most likely cause of bad reading, and the hardest to deal with. "The monotonous, expressionless way in which children, even high up in the senior school, sometimes read," reports the committee which recently investigated the teaching of English in England, "is usually traceable to bad habits acquired in the lower standards or in the Infant's Class." The pupil in the primary or first book class is permitted to stumble and drone through his reading, until the habit of reading without expression has become firmly fixed, and he continues to read in that way even after he no longer needs to hesitate over the words. Much of the effort now required to bring expression into the reading of higher grade pupils would be unnecessary if reading were properly taught in the lower grades. Expression is not something to be added after the child gains a mastery of words; it should be present in everything he reads from the first day he enters school.

When the teacher understands that to explain ordinary cases of poor reading he need not go beyond the

four causes listed above, he has made a long step forward in his attempt to improve the reading of the school, for he has freed his mind of a very common error.

All too frequently the child's failure to read with expression is explained in another way. It is assumed that his crude monotonous reading is the result of his ignorance of the technicalities of vocal expression. Proceeding on this assumption, the teacher gives the child a list of rules of expression, and in the reading lesson spends a great deal of time in trying to get him to raise his voice here, to drop it there, to emphasize a particular word, and to pay special attention to the punctuation. But the theory is quite wrong. Even before the child is able to read he can use the right inflection and emphasis to express his simple thoughts. In his ordinary speech there is no lack of what we call expression. Let any one who doubts this statement listen to the children expressing pleasure or surprise, anxiety or relief during a pause in the music at a movie matinee.

The finer shades of inflection in the voice of a Shakespearean actor are, of course, beyond a child's power, but so are the thoughts and emotions of the Shakespearean drama. The thoughts and emotions of such simple passages as are within his grasp a child can express readily enough, if he can recognize the words rapidly and is really thinking of what he is reading.

An undue emphasizing of the technicalities of expression is bound to result in an artificial style of reading. Right expression must come from realizing vividly what is to be expressed. But the child who is intent on putting into practice certain elocutionary rules and is consciously seeking for a showy effectiveness in the use of pause or emphasis will have very little attention left for the content.

Naturalness is the first desideratum in reading. "Explicit rules for reading," states the report quoted above, "are not what is wanted. They are apt to lead to a stilted and artificial delivery. The essentials, in addition to speech-training, are that the children should understand and feel what they read, and that the teacher himself should be a good reader. From the very beginning, reading should be treated, not as a mechanical trick, but as a means of getting at ideas."

Treatment of Faults

With our minds clear as to the prevalent causes of bad reading, let us go on to methods and devices for removing these causes. Our diagnosis over, we now proceed to treatment. The reading in our schools is none too good; how shall we set about improving it? As in medicine, the treatment should be both preventive and curative. Let us first see what may be done to prevent the child from falling into bad habits of reading.

The essence of the whole matter may be summed up to one simple rule: *Never let the child read anything whatever aloud until he has mastered the words and grasped the thought.* If this rule were carefully observed by every teacher from the Primary Grade to the Fourth Form for one month, the oral reading of the Province would be transformed. The grown-up person is able to read an unfamiliar passage with naturalness and freedom because his eye travels ahead of his voice as the scouts travel ahead of an army. In his reading two processes go on simultaneously—silent reading by the eye and oral reading by the voice. But with the child, at least in the lower grades, the processes must be separated. Before he is required to read any passage aloud, he

should be instructed to read it silently. With older pupils this silent reading is sufficient preparation, but with younger children the teacher should make sure by questions that the words have been mastered and the thought grasped.

If the reading is from the black-board, the teacher may simply point to the key words: What word is this? And this? And this?

When the reading is from a book, he may write the words on the black-board and drill on them there, or he may ask for the words as they stand in the book.

What is the first word in the line? The last? What word comes after this? And before that?

In a rural school where the class is small, the teacher may simply point to the words in each child's book. To help the child to grasp the thought of a passage, the teacher should ask direct questions of the content. If the sentence were, for instance, "The jackal was exceedingly fond of shellfish, especially of river crabs," the teacher might ask the following questions:

Whom is this sentence about? What was he fond of? What kind of shellfish did he like especially?

This process of questioning on the words and the thought before allowing the child to read aloud may seem to the novice a slow and laborious way of proceeding; but it is much the simplest way in the end. The real difficulties in the teaching of oral reading present themselves when the teacher tries to cure the pupil of an habitual mannerism in his reading; and any method that will prevent the child from developing such a bad habit is based on sound principles of pedagogy.

In spite, however, of the most careful preventive measures, a cure for monotonous expressionless reading

is often necessary. Here again let us gather the gist of the matter into a short simple rule that may be adopted by the teacher as a motto: *Never let monotonous expressionless reading go unchecked.* Too often the teacher merely hears the pupils read. One class is called up after another to drone through its lesson, while the teacher checks in a perfunctory way only glaring mispronunciations and unimportant inaccuracies. He should be a good reader himself, and although he should seldom resort to direct imitation as a method of teaching, his reading should stand before the pupils as a stimulating ideal. And every lesson should see a real attempt to improve the pupils' manner of reading. No matter how small the amount of material covered, the teacher should be able to say at the end of every reading lesson: The class is able to read that extract better than before.

Elements of Expression

Although instruction in the technicalities of reading has no place in the teaching of children, the teacher himself, in order that his attempts to improve the child's expression may be definite and purposeful, should have some knowledge of the commoner devices of vocal expression. The following list of expressional elements is, therefore, given for the teacher's use only:

1. Rate: The pupils as a rule are inclined to read too rapidly. Hasty reading does not permit of proper expression and frequently leads to stumbling. Criticism of rapid reading, frequent encouragement to read slowly, and the occasional commendation of deliberate reading will help to cure this elementary fault. A variation in the rate of reading, however, is sometimes used to produce a special effect. Excitement naturally expresses

itself in rapid speech; hence such passages as express excitement should be read at a slightly accelerated speed.

Rapidity of action may also be suggested by rapidity of reading. *The Ride from Ghent to Aix* will illustrate both cases. The action is rapid, and the feeling one of intense excitement, hence the reading should be rapid. When the action is slow or the feeling one of sadness or depression, the reading should be slightly retarded. *The Funeral of Wellington* will serve to illustrate both uses of retarded reading.

2. Grouping: In speech words are not spoken separately but in groups according to the sense. Let the student read aloud any sentence whatever, and he can observe without difficulty this grouping of words.

And I would | that my tongue | could utter |
The thoughts | that arise | in me.

The grouping of words in the reading of the above passage would be as indicated by the lines. The hesitation between "tongue" and "could," however, and between "arise" and "in me," would be so slight that the clauses "that my tongue could utter" and "that arise in me" would be read as larger word-groups.

The child offends in the matter of word-grouping when he is still having difficulty with word-recognition. In this early stage he looks at each word and says it, with the result that each word seems to be a unit in itself. He is not reading at all; he is merely saying the words. When he is able to recognize words freely, his occasional offences against proper word-grouping arise almost always from lack of comprehension.

3. Emphasis: This is in practice the commonest element of vocal expression. It shows itself in everything we say. We cannot utter a sentence of even three or four

words without emphasizing one word more than others. No trick of the voice is more closely connected with the expression of thought.

Let the student experiment with such a simple sentence as the following, noting the change in meaning which results from the emphasizing of first one word and then another: I think that is true. Emphasis on the word "I" implies that some one else thinks it is false; emphasis on the word "think" suggests doubt; emphasis on "that" suggests a contrast with something else that is not true; emphasis on the word "true" implies agreement with what some one else has said. In a sentence of any length several words may be emphasized, some slightly, one or two decidedly. So necessary is emphasis to the true expression of thought that, when it is even in a slight degree lacking, our speech or our reading becomes weak and meaningless. Nothing will dispel the dullness from monotonous reading more surely than a nice observance of emphasis.

4. Inflection: As we talk in ordinary conversation or from the platform, there is a constant variation in the pitch of the voice. Very seldom are two words in succession uttered in exactly the same pitch. This sliding up and down of the pitch of the voice is called inflection. Without such constant variation in pitch the voice is extremely monotonous and conveys very little thought or feeling. There should be in reading the same constant change in the pitch of the voice as in speaking, but if it is to be perfectly natural in the child's reading, this constant play of inflection must be quite unconscious. If we instruct him to vary the pitch of his voice as he reads, the result will be very artificial or

quite ridiculous. When he is thoroughly imbued with the spirit of what he is reading, this constant pleasing variation of the pitch of the voice will follow naturally.

There are, however, two special uses of inflection that will demand the teacher's attention. The falling inflection is used to suggest completeness or partial completeness of thought. Hence it occurs normally at the end of a sentence, and, frequently, to suggest a degree of completeness at the end of a clause. The chief difficulty with pupils will be, not to get them to use the falling inflection where it should be used, but to prevent them from using it where it is out of place. In poetry the child tends to use the falling inflection at the end of every line, whether the thought is complete or not.

Last night among his fellows rough
He jested, quaffed, and swore:
A drunken private of the Buffs,
Who never looked before.

In the above passage the thought is not complete until the end, yet many pupils will use a decided falling inflection at the end of the second line, and some will even break the thought at the end of every line.

Occasionally, too, the child shows the same tendency in prose, especially when he meets with a series of parallel phrases or clauses:

The chuckle with which he said this, and the chuckle with which he paid for the turkey, and the chuckle with which he paid for the cab, and the chuckle with which he recompensed the boy, were only exceeded by the chuckle with which he sat down breathlessly in his chair again and chuckled till he cried.

To bring out the full sense of the above passage the voice should not indicate completeness until the

end of the sentence, yet such a passage would probably, in a weak pupil's reading, be broken several times by the falling inflection.

Rising inflection is used to indicate a questioning attitude of mind. It occurs frequently, but not always, in the asking of a question; and there is no rule to guide us in determining whether or not it should be used in reading a given question. The attitude of mind of the person who asks the question determines the inflection. By combinations of inflection and emphasis the following simple question may be made to express amazement or doubt, or simply to ask for information: "Are you going out to-day?"

5. Quality: The combination of inflection and emphasis will account for most of the effects in oral reading, but not for all. An angry tone is different from a pleading one, and both are different from a tone of joy. What it is in the voice that makes the difference is hard to describe. It is partly emphasis, partly inflection, partly, perhaps, force of utterance, but there is also something else, and that something else we call quality. The necessity for varying the quality of one's voice according to the feeling expressed is most apparent in the reading of conversation. A sudden change in the quality of the voice will be necessary in reading the passage which follows. Scrooge at first pretends to be very angry with Bob Cratchit for being late the morning after Christmas, and then without the least warning his tone changes to one of cordiality.

"Now, I'll tell you what, my friend," said Scrooge, "I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. And, therefore," he continued, leaping from his stool, and giving Bob such a dig in his waistcoat that he staggered back into the Tank again,—"and, therefore, I am about to raise your salary!"

Junior Classes

In the reading of younger pupils the teacher should aim at developing childlike naturalness. Little children should not be expected to read with the force and vigour of adults. Elocutionary or dramatic effects should not be exacted from them, though any spontaneous expression of feeling should be commended. A clear articulation, a smooth and natural grouping of the words, a genuine attempt to bring out the thought by a simple and natural use of emphasis—these are the characteristics which the teacher should try to develop in the junior pupil's reading.

In proceeding through the reading of each selection, the pupils should be required to master a limited amount at a time—one sentence in the First Form, possibly two or three in the Second, if they are progressing favourably. In the study of each passage, the following scheme should be followed:

1. Silent reading
2. Testing knowledge of words
3. Questioning on the sense
4. Oral reading.
5. Improvement where necessary.

Senior Classes

As the pupils grow older the teacher should expect of them a fuller and more adequate expression of thought and feeling; but he should never encourage elocutionary showiness at the expense of naturalness and sincerity. An overdone expression is almost as bad as flatness and monotony. In the senior reading lessons longer sections may be dealt with at a time, and more responsibility may be left with the pupils. Fourth Form pupils should be able to handle a short paragraph or

eight or ten lines of poetry at a time; and in the silent reading they should be able to master both words and sense without the help of questions. So long as pupils are still stumbling over words, no matter what Form they may be in, the junior procedure is recommended; but with good classes from the Third Form up the following simpler scheme may be adopted:

1. Silent reading
2. Oral reading
3. Improvement

Proper Grouping:

An old Indian once bought some things from a white man who kept a store.

If a pupil reads the above sentence one word at a time, his trouble is either that he is unduly slow in word-recognition, or that he has become accustomed to a laboured manner of reading and cannot break away from it. He might be required to read the sentence once more silently. If necessary he might receive further drill in the recognition of the key words. He might be asked questions that would demand certain phrases from the sentence in reply:

Whom is the sentence about? Whom did he buy from? etc.

And he might be asked to tell about the old Indian without looking at his book.

Inflection in Questions:

"Are you hungry, old fellow?"

"Very," answered the frog.

"Don't you like May-flies?"

"Rather! Don't you see I keep opening my mouth, in hopes one will fly in by mistake?"

No rule should be given to the pupils to tell them which inflection to use in reading questions—in fact

"inflection" should not even be mentioned. If a child fails on the first reading to make the questions sound natural, he should be required to ask his neighbour each question, or another pupil might read with him, one taking the part of the trout while the other takes the part of the frog. All that is necessary is to make the child *feel* that he is asking a question. Sometimes it is enough just to have him look away from his book and ask the question of the teacher.

Emphatic Words:

When he got through, he looked in the hole for half a minute; then he says: "Well, you're a long hole, and a deep hole, and a queer hole, but I have started to fill you, and I'll do it if it takes a hundred years."

If a child failed to bring out emphatically the words describing the hole the teacher might question as follows: How did the bluejay feel regarding that hole? What three words tell you what he thought of it? (long, deep, queer) Now read the sentence to show us how very much puzzled he was by it.

The Run-on Line:

Beyond the darkening ocean burned
The bloody sunset's embers,
While the Crimean valleys learned
How English love remembers.

Many pupils will use a falling inflection and a pause at the end of the first line, which would seem to indicate that "ocean" is the subject of "burned," and would leave the second line quite meaningless. To break the thought at the end of the third line would not be so serious, but it should not be done. The child who makes either of these mistakes should be made to think of the meaning.

What was it that burned? Where were the bloody sunset's embers?

Close your eyes and imagine you see the red sunset beyond the darkening ocean.

Now read the stanza so that we may see the picture.

And for the last two lines—

What did the Crimean valleys learn? Read the stanza to tell us that.

A Series of Parallel Clauses or Phrases:

Alas! the keeper catches the rustle, and then a sight of the rod, and then of Tom's hand and arm.

The pupil who lets his voice drop before the end, should be made to see that the keeper became aware of Tom's presence gradually.

What did he catch first? What next? And, finally, what did he see?

Vivid Description:

Ramped and roared the lions with horrid laughing jaws.

If a pupil reads this too rapidly and without properly bringing out the descriptive words, the teacher might question as follows:

As that line is read what do you seem to see? What words make you hear the lions? What words make you see them? Now, read the passage so that we all may see the picture.

Break, break, break
On thy cold grey stones, O Sea!

If a child reads this unimpressively, the teacher might question as follows:

As the first line is read what do you seem to see? (The waves breaking against the rocks) What do you

seem to hear? (The long-drawn-out monotonous sound of the waves)

We must be allowed time to imagine the scene. Read the line very slowly, pausing between the words.

Two special helps in developing ability to read well aloud, of value both in the lower and the higher Forms, should be mentioned here. To gain free natural expression, one of the most helpful devices is *dramatization.* When a story is being acted, pupils whose reading is ordinarily dull and hesitating will show surprising vivacity, and pupils who are always good readers will outdo themselves.

But helpful as dramatization is, it is perhaps surpassed in value by another exercise, namely, *extensive silent reading.* Practice in reading of any sort is bound to give a mastery in the mechanics of the art; and a mastery of the mechanics, as was pointed out earlier in this Chapter, is essential to good reading aloud.

CHAPTER XIV

SUPPLEMENTARY READING

In recent years a change has become apparent in our attitude, not only towards oral reading, but towards the teaching of literature as a whole. The change has come gradually, almost imperceptibly. It is not so much a change in method as in spirit, and it shows itself in a new adjustment of emphasis. For years our courses of study have recognized what we have called the intensive and the extensive methods of reading. The change in spirit has shown itself in a gradual but unmistakable increase in the emphasis placed on extensive reading.

The recent authorization of *Shorter Poems* is an indication of the influence of this new spirit in the teaching of poetry in the secondary schools. What the volume aims to accomplish is best described by an extract from the Preface:

"The value—whether as a means of appreciation or as a discipline—of the fullest and most accurate study of literature is, of course, not disputed. But it is also apparent that the growth of the often very tender plant of poetic appreciation may be repressed by the drudgery of prolonged study, or the forcing on the attention of immature students of characteristics and aspects of poetry outside their natural interest or comprehension. In accordance with the suggestions of some of the teachers, the authorities have, therefore, determined that in addition to texts for what is termed in the Regulations "intensive" study, a large number of shorter poems should be prescribed for more cursory reading. In this way, it is hoped, a spontaneous interest may be

stimulated—such as does in fact naturally awaken in boys and girls of literary and imaginative tendencies living in a suitable environment."

In the elementary schools the influence of the new spirit has not been indicated by the introduction of any new text, but is evidenced by an increasing interest in that branch of the work which we call supplementary reading. In elementary, as in secondary schools, there is no under-estimating of the value of close and searching study of those selections contained in the Readers; but there is a feeling that this intensive study has too often degenerated into a tiresome and exhausting drill on these selections, and there is a desire to widen the scope of the course. In certain sections of the United States this broadening is accomplished by the use of several sets of readers for each grade, but in Ontario we have adhered to the practice of having one authorized Reader for each Form, and have tried to lead the pupils into the broader fields of literature by supplementary reading.

For each Form the Department of Education requires the reading of a certain number of supplementary books, some prose, some poetry; but the teacher should not be satisfied with this minimum requirement. He should encourage his pupils to do as much reading of general literature as is compatible with their health and their progress in the regular school work. His attitude should be that of the wise and sympathetic guide. Every child should be encouraged to follow his own bent, but not exclusively. Occasionally, it is well for the imaginative child, the child who lives in the ethereal world of day-dreams, to read something of a practical character; and sometimes the matter-of-fact child is benefited by being enticed for a short while into the realm of fancy. The teacher should try to inspire in his pupils a spirit

of exploration. That child is lucky who lives in a home where he may have access to all sorts of books—books of fiction, books of travel, books of science, books of poetry—among which he may wander at his will. But few children are so happily situated; and it is the teacher's duty to see that his pupils explore at least the shelves of the school library.

Method

The method of dealing with supplementary reading should be kept quite informal. The child should be allowed as much liberty as possible both as regards what he reads and how he reads it. He should not be made to feel that he is being driven to do a necessary but unpleasant task. How a teacher may endeavour to encourage and to guide the reading of his class is suggested by the rules that follow.

1. Definite Time: Supplementary reading should have a definite allotment of time on the time-table. In schools where supplementary reading proves unsatisfactory, the reason is frequently because it is dealt with in a desultory fashion. The pupils look on the reading of books as an extra and rather onerous task. If extensive reading is regularly provided for in the week's work, the children will readily accept it as something that should be done, and will not resent it as an imposition. Recent regulations advise that an hour and a half each day be spent in seat work. Part of this time should be definitely allotted to reading, and this reading should be taken as seriously and done as systematically as any other busy-work. It need not always be of the recognized supplementary books in literature. Sometimes it may be of books that the children themselves

have brought to school, sometimes of the history, geography, or other readers.

2. Reading to be Actually Done: The teacher should assure himself that the reading is actually being done. This should be accomplished by oral questioning. The writing of synopses, if it has a value at all, is more suited to secondary school work. For young children it is too laborious to be interesting. The discussion of a book should be as free and easy as possible, more in the spirit of a conversation than of a test. The teacher should remember that his purpose in this part of the work is, not to see that the pupils have learned a certain number of facts, but merely to assure himself that the reading is being done honestly and intelligently.

3. Reading to the Class: The teacher should do a certain amount of reading to his class every week. In no way can he give more pleasure to his pupils than by reading to them; and the pupils should not be denied this pleasure. Even the busiest teacher can find a few minutes every day or every second day to read to his pupils. Nor is this reading only for pleasure. The wise teacher can use it to good advantage in influencing the pupils' tastes. If he finds them addicted to reading trashy books, he can frequently change their whole line of reading by himself reading to them something of a superior character. Very often the child reads books of the poorer sort simply because he does not know that there is anything better. A teacher started several of his pupils, both boys and girls, searching everywhere for Stevenson's novels simply by reading *Kidnapped* to them. Another teacher read to his school a few poems from A. A. Milne's *When We Were Very Young*, and discovered that from that time on the book was scarcely

ever on the shelves. Many grown-up people look back to the hours when some teacher read to them, possibly as a special treat on Friday afternoons, as among the pleasantest recollections of their school life. And recently some pupils, in discussing the relative merits of several teachers, were heard to announce as the last word on the subject: "Oh, she's the nicest of all! She reads to us three times a week!"

4. Encouragement of Outside Reading: The teacher should take an interest in the outside reading of the pupils. Not all of the pupils' general reading will be done in school. Some of the children, most of them in the higher Forms, will read at home. By tactful questioning and without seeming to pry into their affairs, the teacher should try to discover what sort of books they are reading. If he discovers that they are devouring mawkish and melodramatic books, he should not be too condemnatory. It is better that they should read inferior literature (if it is not morally harmful) than that they should read none at all; and if the teacher condemns utterly the sort of literature they have found enjoyable, they will usually either continue to read it surreptitiously or will stop reading altogether. The teacher's opinion has tremendous weight with the pupils. It is better for him to recommend a good book than to condemn a poor one. When a pupil speaks in glowing terms of some inferior book, the teacher; instead of showing disapproval, might say: "Yes, that is very interesting; but I know of an even better one of the same sort. Have you ever read such and such?"

Some teachers set aside a composition period occasionally for the discussion of books. When this is done the discussion should be, not a task, but a pleasant interlude in the day's work. The pupils should be

encouraged to talk about the books they are reading, telling what they are like and where they may be obtained. A warning, however, should be given here. The loquacious child, if he is given an opportunity, will frequently occupy the whole period in attempting to recount a complete story. This should not be encouraged. It is more likely to kill the interest of the other pupils than to arouse it. A suggestion as to the character of the story is all that is necessary.

5. Provision of Material: The teacher should make an effort to see that plenty of suitable reading material is provided. In urban centres he is very much helped in his task of providing suitable reading material for his pupils by the public library. He and the librarian of the children's section may profitably co-operate. The teacher can do much to encourage the pupils to go to the library, and he may even bring books from the library to distribute on his own responsibility among his class.

The teacher in the rural schools is, however, not so happily situated. He has at his disposal only the books on the shelves of the school library and such books as the pupils may bring from their homes. Advice as to the conducting of a rural school library is given in a separate section below; but a word might be said here about books that are brought from the children's homes. For such books a separate shelf might be reserved, and although the teacher should exercise a general supervision to see that nothing objectionable finds its place there, he should encourage the pupils to bring as many of their favourites as possible and should allow free access to this section of the library.

"It is of the first importance," says the report of the committee quoted in the previous Chapter, "that

the children should be encouraged to form the reading habit. A child's desire to read ought never to be frustrated for want of books. If he has once become a reader of books worth reading, there need be no anxiety about his education."

The School Library

In the previous Chapter it was pointed out that we expect our teaching of literature, as our teaching of other subjects, to be followed by some form of activity, some form of expression on the part of the child; and various ways of relating literature to the child's activities were suggested. All these devices have their place, but our literature lesson has been a true success only if it has resulted in stimulating the child to further reading. If, however, books are not available for him to read, our efforts to develop in him a love of reading have been in vain.

The child in the town or city is made welcome at the public library, where, indeed, he usually finds a special children's department; but in the rural communities the school library is frequently the only one to which he has access. Hence, although a library is valuable in any school, it is especially valuable in a rural school; and the hints given here are intended especially to help the rural teacher.

Let us suppose that a teacher has inspected the library in his school and has found that there is room for improvement. When he is considering what is to be done, he will have two problems to solve.

What the Library Should Contain

The regulations of the Department of Education require that in any school library there shall be a Dictionary, a set of the Manuals, a Gazetteer, an Atlas, the History and Geography Readers, and such supplementary books as are required for the supplementary reading in the entrance class. Beyond these necessary books there should be as large a selection of general literature as possible. The teacher and the school board who wish to enlarge the school library by the purchase of further books should consider carefully the purpose and possibilities of such a library. The following rules will serve as a guide in the purchase of books:

1. Attractive: The books should be attractive to juvenile readers. Although the library may be used by the community generally, it must be remembered that it is primarily for the children. Sometimes it contains large numbers of books that are suitable only for adult readers. There is no objection to such books being in the library if the requirements of the children are not neglected.

2. Of Real Worth: The books should be of real worth. In the home the child will probably find enough reading of the light, ephemeral sort. In the school library he should find books of genuine and permanent value. But when it is said that these books should be of high value, it does not mean that they should be dull. The best books are almost invariably the most readable.

3. Suitable Material: There should be books to suit all tastes. There should be books of travel, of biography, story books, books of scientific interest, books relating to the study of nature, books of poetry—in fact all the

varieties of reading matter that are found on the shelves of a library for adults. Although some books should relate especially to the interest and activities of the girl or of the boy, too much stress need not be placed on the difference of taste in the sexes. A good juvenile book will usually be appreciated equally by boys and girls.

There should be books for all ages. Every child in the school, even the smallest, should find some book in the library that he can enjoy. Too often in the purchase of books the needs of the primary department are overlooked. For the little ones there should be a picture book or two and a few story primers, as well as books that will be read with enjoyment and profit by the older pupils. (See Graded List of Supplementary Reading issued by the Department of Education.)

The Care of the Library

The library should not be hidden in some obscure recess of the school, but should stand where the children can see it and have easy access to it. The teacher might well give a little time and thought to making it look attractive. The books should not be piled higgledy-piggledy, but should be arranged in an orderly fashion on the shelves so that the titles are clearly visible. An elaborate cataloguing system such as is used in a large public library is not at all necessary; but in a note-book or scribbler a list of the books should be kept, and each book should be numbered. When a book is allowed out, a record should be kept of the child who takes it and of the date. A librarian may be appointed from among the pupils to keep this record, and if a book is kept too long the borrower should be reminded.

A good library is a real aid to the teacher in his work. It will be of assistance to him, not only in the teaching of literature, but in the teaching of all subjects. The rural teacher who strives to assign useful seat work will find it an especial boon. Too frequently children in a large ungraded school, where the teacher can give only a small share of his time to each class, are left to themselves for a considerable period of each day with the assigned task finished and no definite work to do. How better can such children be employed than in reading some good book from the library?

The teacher, of course, should make some effort to see that the pupils are properly using the library. A talk early in the term on books, how to care for them, how to use them, and what may be got from them, will be helpful. If necessary the teacher should deliberately try to arouse the children's interest in the library. He might read part of a story aloud and tell the pupils to get the book and finish it for themselves. Where an extract is studied in one of the Readers, reference should be made to the book from which it is taken. Pupils should be required to tell each other of the good books they have found on the library shelves. And occasionally the pupils might be sent to the library to find certain information in the Geography or History Readers, information that the teacher has before assured himself is really there.

CHAPTER XV

CORRELATION

Literature more than any other subject lends itself to correlation. Not only does literature gain from being associated with other subjects, but it is impossible to study it thoroughly and intelligently without extending our research into other fields. The raw material from which literature is made is the subject-matter of certain sciences. The difference between literature and history, or literature and nature study, is not in the material that they deal with, but exists only in the point of view. The events of the past may be worked into a history or a historical novel, and it is possible to regard a flower or a bird either from the point of view of the student of nature or of the poet. To correlate literature with other branches of study, therefore, is simply to recognize its true nature.

Literature and Nature Study

A surprisingly large amount of poetry is inspired by a love of nature. Poets delight in the lilting songs of birds and in the fragrance and beauty of flowers. They are never tired of singing about these things in their poetry. To appreciate Wordsworth or Lampman, our minds must be stored with the lore of the nature lover. Dry fact is not what is needed, but the kind of familiarity that comes from an intimate and affectionate intercourse with the things of nature.

If the pupils are to get the best out of nature poetry, they must be trained to observe what is

round about them. Selections imbued with the love of nature should be taken at appropriate seasons, *The First Spring Day* being studied in the spring and *The Death of the Flowers* in the autumn.

When a certain knowledge of nature is necessary to the full understanding of any selection, that knowledge should be imparted in a nature study lesson. The study of the oriole and its home, for instance, might well precede the reading of Lowell's poem *The Nest*; and the pupils might be asked to observe carefully the appearance and habits of the red-winged blackbird before studying Ethelwyn Wetherald's poem of that name.

Literature and History

Literature cannot properly be studied apart from history. Many of the selections in the Readers would be almost incomprehensible to the person who had no historical knowledge, and both subjects are helped by close correlation. The study of history provides the necessary background of knowledge for the understanding of such selections as have an historical setting, and the reading of historical poems and stories will aid greatly in the study of history, by enlivening the dry facts with touches of human interest and by picturing the events of the past with that vividness which is possible only to the imaginative writer. Selections of an historical character should be read and studied after the period to which they relate has been dealt with in history, and it is usually well to introduce the literature lesson by reviewing briefly the historical facts which form the background. *The Charge of the Light Brigade* should be read in connection with the study of the Crimean War, *Jacques Cartier* in connection with the

study of that navigator's voyages; *The Crusader and the Saracen* should be connected with the study of the Crusades, and *The Death of Wellington* with the study of that great man's career.

Literature and Composition

To a certain extent the connection of literature with composition has been dealt with in Chapter XII. Although the reproduction of the content of selections studied in the literature lesson is of little or no value, it was pointed out there that topics for compositions are frequently suggested by these selections. But the correlation of literature with composition by no means ends there. There is a constant and invaluable interchange of influences between these two subjects. It is in his close study of prose and poetry that the child develops his vocabulary; and the effort to describe his own experiences and express his own ideas will help him to appreciate the writings of others. Just how far a teacher should go in drawing a child's attention directly to the vocabulary of a selection is in some doubt. The minute study of words, if carried too far, is not conducive to enjoyment; but a judicious examination of the phraseology will help the child not only to understand a selection, but also to enlarge his vocabulary.

Literature and Art

The connection of art with the study of literature has also been dealt with to a certain extent in Chapter XII. It was suggested there that the pupils might frequently be required to illustrate selections they have read, but this does not exhaust the usefulness of art in the study of literature. Especially in the lower grades,

pictures may frequently be used to arouse the child's interest in the selection, and in all grades the value of pictures to illustrate certain points is undisputed.

Sir Henry Newbolt's poem *The Fighting Téméraire* was suggested by Turner's well-known picture by the same name; and both picture and poem are closely related to history. Here, therefore, is an excellent opportunity for a correlation of history, art, and literature; and the lesson outlines which follow are intended to illustrate how correlation in general may be carried out.

History Lesson: The Battle of Trafalgar

The lesson, since it is for a Third Form, must be treated in the story manner, dates and facts giving place largely to story interest. The information might be conveyed in somewhat the following manner:

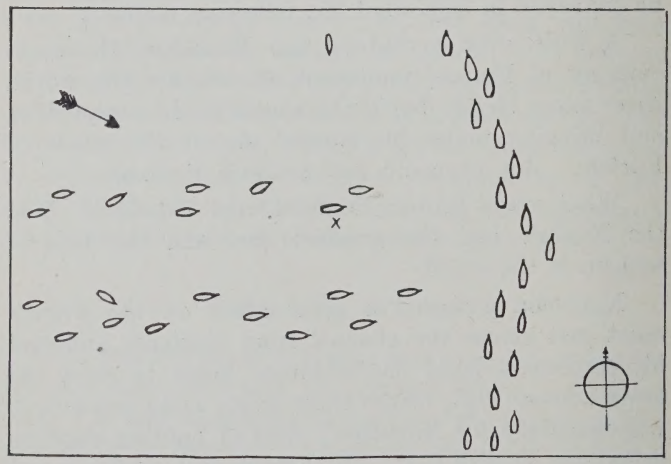
A little over a century ago Napoleon, the great emperor of France, undertook to conquer the world. After many bloody battles he succeeded in vanquishing and bringing under his control almost the whole of Europe. But he could not conquer England.

What would protect England from Napoleon? Yes, the English had the greatest fleet and the bravest seamen in the world.

Napoleon gathered a great army on the French coast just across the channel from England, and had his carpenters build flat-bottomed boats to carry his army across. But, before these boats could put out, it was necessary for Napoleon's fleet of fighting ships to defeat the English fleet. The French fleet itself was not big enough to do this; but Napoleon, who was really master of Europe, forced the Spanish fleet to join with

his own. But the difficulty was to get his fleet together. Part of the French fleet was blockaded by the English at Brest and part at Toulon, while the Spanish ships which were in harbour at Cadiz were afraid to put out to sea. (The places mentioned should be found on a map.) During a storm, however, Admiral Villeneuve, who commanded the French fleet at Toulon, succeeded in escaping. He joined the Spanish at Cadiz and sailed off towards the West Indies. This was a trick. He wished to draw Nelson, the English admiral, far out into the Atlantic, and then he intended to turn about under cover of night and sail for the English Channel. His plan worked. Nelson followed, but soon found out the trick and turned back.

After some skirmishing the two fleets met at Cape Trafalgar. Nelson had twenty-seven ships to thirty-



three French and Spanish ships under Admiral Villeneuve. When the English caught sight of the French

fleet, it was sailing northward in the form of a great crescent. Lord Nelson decided on a bold plan of attack. He arranged his ships in two parallel lines, his own ship the *Victory* leading one line, while the *Royal Sovereign*, Lord Collingwood's ship — his second in command, led the other. These two columns were to sail straight for the centre of the French fleet and, by breaking it into two parts, destroy its unity and so smash it to pieces.

To understand the daring nature of this plan, we must know how the old battle-ships fought. Nowadays a battle-ship is armed with a few very large guns which can be aimed ahead or to either side at will; but the old battle-ship of Nelson's day had a great many smaller guns arranged in two or three tiers along each side. These guns could be aimed only to port and starboard; they could not be brought to bear on anything ahead or astern. Now if you look at the drawing on the blackboard, you can see why Nelson's plan was so daring. While the English fleet was sailing into action its guns were useless, whereas every gun on the port side of the French ships within range could be brought to bear on the first ships of the approaching British columns. The whole success of Nelson's plan depended on whether or not the three or four ships leading the English lines could stand the awful drubbing they would receive while they were approaching the French lines.

One of the most terrible battles in history followed. The French and Spaniards fought bravely, but they were completely beaten by the English. Nelson himself was killed, but he lived long enough to know that a victory had been won.

Art Lesson: The Fighting Téméraire

As an introduction to the study of the picture, the pupils might be told the story of *The Téméraire.* The battle-ship was built in England seven years before the battle of Trafalgar. The story that she was captured from the French at the Battle of the Nile is quite wrong. It was started on the assumption that she must have been a French ship at one time since she had a French name. But the name *Téméraire,* which means the bold one, was given her by the English. Years later one of the dreadnoughts was also called by this name.

She followed Nelson's own ship, the *Victory,* into the battle of Trafalgar, and fought so well that she was afterwards called *The Fighting Téméraire.*

But fashions in battle-ships change. Steam power was introduced to replace sails; bigger guns were manufactured, and armour plating came into general use. With these developments the old ships of Nelson's fleet were completely outclassed and were discarded or destroyed. After many years of usefulness the *Téméraire* was sold out of the service. Turner, the artist who painted the picture called *The Fighting Téméraire,* saw her being towed away to be broken up. As a sub-title to his picture he put the lines:

> The flag that braved the battle and the breeze
> No longer owns her.

A coloured print of the picture should if possible be used.

Which ship is *The Téméraire?* What sort of ship is she? (A sailing ship)

How has the artist suggested that her career is over? (By painting her at sunset; by making her look

old-fashioned, ghostly; by contrasting her with the up-to-date little steam tug)

How has he suggested that her career was a noble one? (By the glorious colours in the sunset and by the dignified appearance of the ship itself with its high bulwarks and towering spars)

Literature Lesson: The Fighting Téméraire

The poem should be read aloud by the teacher.

As the poem was read what pictures did you see? (The ship swinging at anchor while the sailors polished the guns; the ship winging its way into battle; the ship fading down the river.)

What stage in the ship's career is suggested by the first picture?

What suggests that the ship is new? (Morning; the sailor lads are proud of her; they are longing for battle.)

What stage in the ship's career is represented by the second picture?

What suggests that she is at the height of her glory? (Noontide; the sailor lads are preparing for battle.)

Reference here might be made to the history.

What battle is about to take place? In that battle *The Téméraire* was in a place of honour. She was right behind Nelson's own ship. (She is marked X on the diagram.) The casualties among her crew were very heavy. The sailor lads knew that there would be "many grim and gory."

What stage in the ship's life is represented by the last picture?

What suggests that it is the end? (Sunset; the phantom voice singing of the great days done; "She's fading down the river.")

As a conclusion to the lesson, the pupils might be asked to compare the poet's manner of treating the subject with the artist's.

USEFUL BOOKS

A Graded List of Supplementary Reading, Department of Education, Toronto.

How to Tell Stories to Children, Sara Cone Bryant. Houghton Mifflin Co., New York; (Thos. Allen, Toronto).

Stories to Tell to Children, Sara Cone Bryant. Houghton Mifflin Co., New York; (Thos. Allen, Toronto).

The Art of the Story-Teller, Marie L. Shedlock. D. Appleton & Co., New York.

The Teaching of English, P. Chubb. Macmillan Co., Toronto.

Talks on Teaching Literature, Arlo Bates. Houghton Mifflin Co., New York; (Thos. Allen, Toronto).

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